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FEATURE

TEACH YOUR OLD PC NEW TRICKS

How to optimize your machine for today's games

THE GAMES

12 CURSE OF THE AZURE BONDS

AD&D adventuring in the best traditions of the genre

20 THE DUEL: TEST DRIVE II

California wheelin' from the redwood forests to the Mexican border

25 THE FAERY TALE ADVENTURE

Two brothers
undertake a magical
but dangerous quest for
a talisman

30 F-16 COMBAT PILOT

Head out for dogfighting in an F-16 Falcon — or command a whole squadron

35 F-19 STEALTH FIGHTER

Fly this hi-tech fighter on missions in four real-life locales

FIRE-BRIGADE: THE BATTLE FOR KIEV

Fight a pivotal WWII battle from either the German or Soviet side

45 HILLSFAR

The second AD&D game for the PC blends role-playing and action

50 KING'S QUEST IV: THE PERILS OF ROSELLA

Using legends and fables, the princess

tries to save King Graham's life

55 THE MAGIC CANDLE

An example of traditional fantasy role-playing at its best

60 MANHUNTER 2: SAN FRANCISCO

Those pesky Orbs are back — and they're still trying to rule the world

65 OMNICRON CONSPIRACY

A space opera with a PG-13 rating and a snappy sense of humor

70 RED STORM RISING

This complex simulation of sub warfare captures the spirit of the best -selling book

75 SIM CITY

Build the city of your dreams — or night-

CONTENTS

mares — with this acclaimed simulation

SPACE QUEST III: PIRATES OF PESTULON

Another galactic romp with that one-of-a-kind space custodian, Roger Wilco

85 SPACE ROGUE

Yo ho ho! Find your fortune as the captain of a galactic Jolly Roger

90 TARGHAN

Grab your sword and your shuriken -- you'll need them both in this action adventure

95 UNIVERSAL MILITARY SIMULATOR

Re-enact famous battles or devise new strategies in this timeless war simulation

100 ACTION STATIONS!

The authenticity
of this naval warfare
game more than
compensates for its
spartan appearance

102 ARCHIPELAGOS

Find and melt strange alien obelisks before they take over the world

104 CHESSMASTER 2100

A simple interface and plenty of options make this one of the best PC chess programs ever

106 ECHELON

There's a planet to explore ... if the space pirates don't get you first

108 HIDDEN AGENDA

A geopolitical simulation with you as

presidente of a Central American nation

110 HOLE-IN-ONE MINIATURE GOLF

Top-notch graphics bring a new challenge to a favorite pastime

112 SILPHEED

A smooth space shoot'em-up straight from the popular Japanese arcade game

114 STEEL THUNDER

Combining action and strategy, this simulation brings tank warfare to life

116 TANGLED TALES

A tongue-in-cheek adventure that's perfect for newcomers to role-playing adventures

119 TONGUE OF THE FATMAN

It takes a big man — a really big man —

to defeat Mondo the Fat at his own game

120 VETTE!

Explore the sights of San Francisco as you race against the world's best sports cars

122 WHERE IN TIME IS CARMEN SANDIEGO?

That slippery thief is more elusive than ever now that she's captured a time machine

124 WINDWALKER

As pupil of a mysterious sage, you must restore an emperor to his rightful throne

126 CENTURION: DEFENDER OF ROME

The legions of Rome need a commander. Quick can you say "Carthago delenda est?"

135 CHAMPIONS OF KRYNN

The first AD&D computer game set in the world of Dragonlance

140 CONQUESTS OF CAMELOT

Join King Arthur in a quest to prevent the collapse of the Round Table and Camelot itself

145 KING'S BOUNTY

Return the Sceptre
of Order to
King Maximus in this
charming and engaging
role-playing game

150 LES MANLEY IN: THE SEARCH FOR THE KING

Can a nebbish find happiness with the most beautiful secretary in the building?

160 LOOM

Help Bobbin weave magic that will restore hope to the world

165 RAILROAD TYCOON

A complex but highly playable and addictive simulation of 19th-century railroading

170 RED BARON

Duel with WWI's great aces or play out a full career in this dazzling air-combat simulator

174 THE SAVAGE EMPIRE

An exciting adventure with a "lost world" setting that would make Edgar Rice Burroughs proud

178 SWORD OF THE SAMURAI

Political and military intrigue complicate

CONTENTS

your struggles to rule all of feudal Japan

183 WING COMMANDER

This award-winning space combat game sets new standards in raphics and animation

188 BATTLES OF NAPOLEON

Refight the classic battles of the Napoleonic Age or design your own

190 DUCKTALES

Humor, adventure, action, and strategy make this game enjoyable for players of all ages

192 ISHIDO: THE WAY OF STONES

An ancient oriental game of quiet contemplation and careful strategy

194 LHX ATTACK CHOPPER

Fly Desert Storm copters and other hi-tech wonders on missions in the Middle East, Europe, or Vietnam

196 LINKS: THE CHALLENGE OF GOLF

The incredible graphics and authentic touches make this one of the best golf games ever

NOBUNAGA'S AMBITION II

Manage the demands of your province while dealing with ambitious warlords in shogun-era Japan

200 POPULOUS

The life of an omnipotent being isn't at all what you might imagine it to be

RICK DAVIS' WORLD CUP SOCCER

The PC version of the arcade game brings unique touches to soccer simulations

204 TREASURE TRAP

The treasure in this sunken ship is an inviting prize, but danger is everywhere

206 WONDERLAND

Making it through the madcap tea party is the very least of your problems

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EDITOR'S NOTES

Welcome to Volume 1 of Game Player's Encyclopedia of PC Games. The games covered here were selected by our editors from the pages of our Game Player's PC Strategy Guide magazine, and they span all entertainment catégories simulations, fantasy role-playing games, sports, historical simulations, graphic adventures, and so on. All of the games in this volume were released in the past two to three years, and many of them represent the best in PC gaming for that time span.

Readers of our PC Strategy Guide have written to us, indicating that they've discovered the world of PC games only in recent months. And they've informed us that, being latecomers, they've missed a lot of good earlier PC games — after all, each issue usually covers the current batch of entertainment titles. This encyclopedia, then, is an answer to the needs of those newer gamers. We also think of this volume as a bookshelf reference for veteran PC gamers. In keeping with the GAME PLAYER'S tradition of indepth coverage, we not only tell you what a game is about and what our opinion is, but we also offer lots of hints, tips, and screen shots from every stage of the game.

Some of you have had your PC system for several years, and you're doubtless aware that many games released in the past 12-18 months have hardware requirements that exceed those of your current system. For those readers, we've included "Teach Your Old PC New Tricks: How to Optimize Your Machine for Today's Games" as a lead article. Here you'll find some practical advice on adding memory, upgrading your microprocessor and video, shrinking DOS, and

We're certain that you'll find a lot of valuable game coverage in this first volume, and there's more to come — look for Volume 2 this fall. And happy gaming!

Lance Elko Editorial Director

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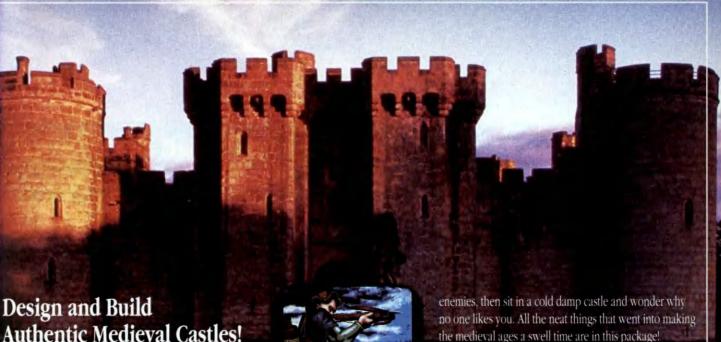
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TEACH YOUR OLD PC NEW TRICKS

How to Optimize Your Machine for Today's Games GARY MEREDITH

t's a familiar scene. You bring home the latest flight simulator. The anticipation is almost too much to bear as you feed the floppies into your PC and its groaning hard drive. The last disk is loaded, you confidently type in the game's name — and all you get is a message: INSUFFICIENT MEMORY.

The newest games and simulators on the market these days are wonders, to be sure. But there's a price to pay for their increasing complexity and breathtaking graphics. Not too long ago, games ran perfectly well on older PCs with slower microprocessors, CGA graphics, and only 512K-, or even 256K— of internal computer RAM memory. Many current games are designed to push DOS's 640K RAM limit, to utilize all the speed of even the faster 286-microprocessorbased AT-level machines, and to look best on Super-VGA monitors.

Short of upgrading to the latest \$5,000 486 33-MHz system, there are a number of steps you can take to optimize your current PC for the coming wave of powerhouse games.

FREE UP SOME MEMORY

unning out of RAM is probably the most common problem. The new games demand more RAM. Add a mouse driver and your new game may run impaired (sacrificing detail, speed, or some other feature), or may simply refuse to run altogether.

The documentation for most games tells you to remove any TSR (Terminate, Stay Resident) programs. The easiest way to get rid of TSR's and other memory eaters is to rename two files in the root directory of your hard drive: Change CONFIG.SYS to CONFIG.BAK and change AUTOEXEC.BAT to AUTOEXEC.BAK. Then reboot your computer by holding down the ALT-CTRL-DEL keys at the same time.

If this doesn't work, rename these two files as their original names, load your CONFIG.SYS file into a word processor, and do a little doctoring. Make a copy of the original CONFIG.SYS called CONFIG.BAK so you can restore it later. Then look at what's inside the CONFIG.SYS file. Usually, you'll find FILE= and BUFFERS= statements that set aside RAM space for more efficient file processing and disk performance.

Modify the CONFIG.SYS file using your word processor, DOS's EDLIN, or any other text editor that can work with plain ASCII text. With many games, you may be able to get by with only FILES=10 or even FILE=5 allocations, and you can drop the BUFFERS entirely, if you don't mind the computer accessing the hard drive more often. Save the altered CONFIG.SYS using your word processor's SAVE AS ASCII option. Then reboot the computer. Just remember to replace the original CONFIG.SYS file when you decide to use such programs as word processors or spreadsheets, which will usually require the original CONFIG.SYS setup.

Also, some innocuouslooking files may reside within your AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS files that can take a sizeable bite out of your RAM. VDISK, for example, uses part of your memory to create a virtual disk. Any drivers loaded in when you turn on the computer, including ANSI SYS, can also use up valuable space. In most cases, these programs are geared more to the productivity side of the computer and aren't needed for playing games. Most games create their own operating environments when you load them.

SHRINK DOS

OS 4.0 and higher versions can use up more RAM than earlier versions of DOS. When DOS 4.0 is first installed, you're asked to choose how much of DOS you want loaded into RAM at boot-up (for greater speed of access to various DOS functions). Since you or your dealer probably opted for a balance between RAM-resident DOS and free RAM workspace, you may be able to re-install DOS and this time request a minimal DOS RAM presence. The extra 20K of memory could make all the difference.

Alternatively, you might consider changing your operating system entirely. Digital Research's new *DR*. *DOS* 5.0 gives you all of the power and features of DOS 4.01 (with some welcome improvements), but takes up much less memory. Depending on your setup, you may be able to enjoy as much as 620K free RAM by switching to *DR*. *DOS*.

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UPGRADE YOUR PROCESSOR

he complexity of some newer games puts a considerable premium on processing speed. Even 286-based computers are hard-pressed to do justice to many of the simulators coming out these days. However, there are a couple of hardware enhancements that will improve the performance of even the early 8088-based PC's. NEC offers the V20 and V30 processor chips, which fit right into the standard 8088 socket on your computer's motherboard. For less than \$15 (if you are buying mail order), you can effect a noticeable improvement to your computer's processing speed. You may have to do a little detective work, however, since these chips, never big sellers, are becoming more and more difficult to find.

Another, although significantly more expensive, way to gain a little extra speed is to install an 8087 math co-processor chip. The drawbacks to this approach are that the chip costs from \$80 to \$150 (mail order), and it doesn't speed up every program.

For a bit more (starting at around \$200), you can buy 286 accelerator boards, which can really give your old PC a kick in the pants. Because these boards still rely on some of the systems from the host PC or XT, they won't make your computer quite as fast as a standard AT. But you should be happy with the increase in performance nonetheless. They're very easy to install (you just need an empty expansion slot), and with their prices as low as we'll probably see for the near future, an accelerator board could make the most significant and inexpensive — improvement to a PC's efficiency.

RIGHT VIDEO

hich video mode vou select at the start of a game — CGA, EGA, VGA, etc. — can affect the overall speed of a game. While it's certainly simple enough to pop a VGA card into a PC or XT and to upgrade your monitor, you may not like the results. Extra resolution and color require extra processing power. To a great extent, this additional processing is done on the video board itself, but it still falls to the computer's microprocessor to handle some of the additional graphics information.

If you own an older PC, and you play games featuring anything more than basic animation (particularly such graphics-intensive games as simulations), you should probably select nothing higher than EGA. Most games feature setup programs that let you force a video mode on your computer. You can often speed things up by dropping a notch, such as from VGA to EGA.

DEFRAG YOUR HARD DRIVE

ne speed factor that some game players neglect is the hard drive. Saving and deleting files on a disk drive eventually creates "holes" on the drive, spaces the drive head must traverse searching for active files. Even worse, an individual file might be in pieces, scattered, fragmented all over the surface of the drive.

Fragmentation occurs because a computer saves a game — or any program for that mat-

ter — by depositing it (or parts of it) onto available spaces as it comes to them. After a few months of loading and erasing various programs, free zones can be few and very far between. When this happens, the computer might load in 15 percent of a file, have to search elsewhere for the next 20 percent, then go somewhere distant for another chunk, and so on. This seriously retards loading the files that most games bring into the computer's RAM during game play, especially if you're using an older and slower drive to begin with.

Disk utility programs, such as those by Norton or Mace, can work wonders with a hard disk suffering from the "swiss cheese syndrome." Alternatively, there are similar utilities available via shareware programs found on BBS's and information services such as CompuServe. These programs rearrange everything on the disk, putting allied files next to each other, and making individual files contiguous. That considerably shortens the distance the drive head must travel during a given load.

Games are reaching new levels of quality in sound, animation, graphic detail, and playing complexity. For better or worse, we're in the fast lane on the road to virtual reality, and this requires all the power that cutting-edge computers can offer. This trend, combined with the extraordinary velocity of technological advances in the computer world, suggests that there are going to be several new generations of machines in this decade alone. It's a sad fact that older computers will indeed sink to relic status with startling rapidity. But there are still several software and hardware tweaks available to keep PC and XT owners in the game for the present.



If YouWere Ever Bitten jet Evei



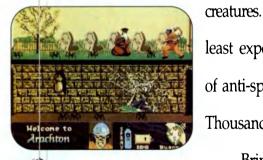
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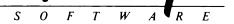
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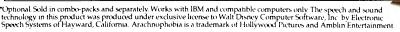
If you're smart enough, quick enough, and able to wipe out a

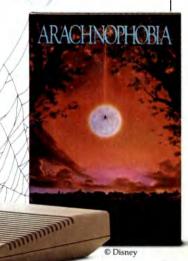
few thousand of the venomous vermin, you might just make it

to the final confrontation in the Amazon Jungle. And

even the score, once and for all.







CURSE OF THE AZURE BONDS

f you became fond of the adventurers you created in Pool of Radiance or Hillsfar, there's good news. In the latest Advanced Dungeons and Dragons game, Curse of the Azure Bonds, you can create new characters or revive old favorites. Curse is actually the sequel to Pool of Radiance, returning players to a place southwest of the Moonsea area used in the Forgotten Realms campaign.

Your adventure begins with level 5 characters and enough money to buy basic equipment. There are two new character classes in Curse, paladins and rangers, and your characters can advance to high priests, lords, wizards, or master thieves. Magic-users have two dozen new upper-level spells to cast.

You'll use those new powers against new monster types — everything from salamanders to manticores. Furthermore, you're almost immediately thrown into battle deep within the thieves' guild. You'll have to win battle after battle to escape the guild and travel through the sewers. But you have a full tactical combat system with which you can control the actions of each party member. Your flanking maneuvers are critical since spells and weapons have limited ranges.



As the session begins, the screen shows the characters in your party and offers a number of choices. To look at a character's stats, press V.



Don't spend every cent you have on weapons for your fighters. You can find equipment by the ton on defeated enemies, and before too long you'll end up leaving most of it where it lies. Give your party a variety of useful weapons to begin, then let them find the rest. Save your money for character advancement.



As in AD&D, magic-users can hold limited spells in their memory. Flashine, the magic-user, has two magic missile spells, two sleep spells, two stinking clouds, and a fireball.



Once they're past the initial encounters in the sewers, your party is able to move where it wants. Since they can no longer enter Tilverton, they should journey on to the next town.

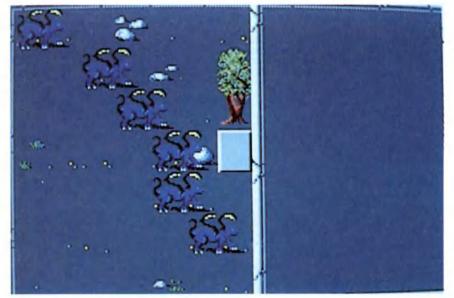


You'll see the camp screen often. When in camp, you can heal wounds with magic, let characters rest, alter their marching order, and, most importantly, save games to disk.

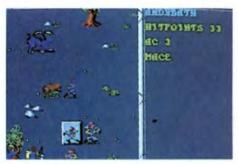
Be sure your magic-users are in range before having them cast spells. If they're out of range when you start to cast a spell, you'll lose the spell completely. In critical battle situations, this can be disastrous.



As the battle begins, Burglo the thief is first to take action. You can move him, view his stats, aim his bow at a specific enemy target, use an item, or have the computer guide his combat.



If you scroll the battlefield using the Aim function, you can see the line of enemy creatures. This battle, unlike some in the sewers of Tilverton, will be extremely difficult.



With a displacer beast at the top of the screen, Andybath prepares to take action. His best bet is to arm himself with his long bow and try to injure the enemy. The mace won't help him now.



Poor Feisty is surrounded by three displacer beasts. Already injured, his goose looks particularly well cooked. His only chance is for the others to help him, but they're almost as busy as he is.

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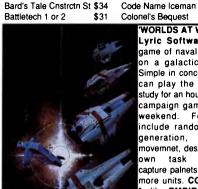
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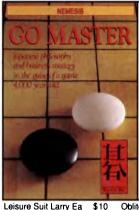
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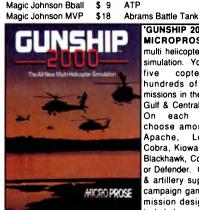
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FULL TIME HELP WANTED

Early in the game, a thief will offer you sanctuary. Even though your first instinct tells you not to trust thieves, give this one a chance. The thief will lead you to the sewers where you'll end up in a long series of battles as you find your way out.



At the top of the screen, two party members lie dying after an attack by the displacer beasts. Andybath must decide whether to protect himself or bandage a party member. If they remain unbandaged, they will die.



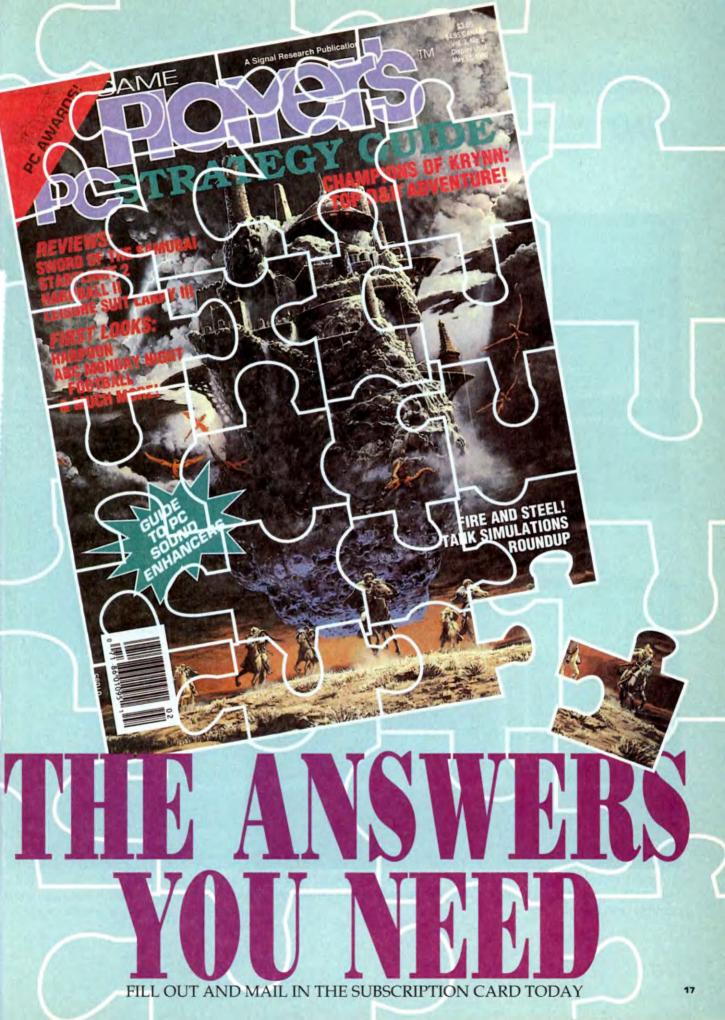
Deep in the sewers, the party finds the leader of the deadly Fire Knives. He speaks, but you won't know what he says until you read Entry 11 in the Adventurer's Journal. This journal contains a wealth of important clues.



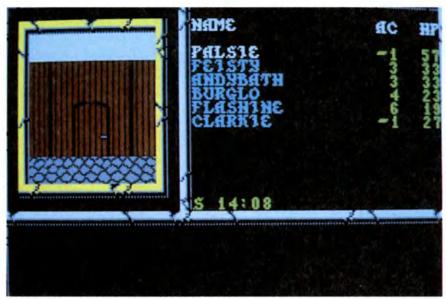
The party faces an enemy gathering of many red-robed Fire Knives, who are accompanied by an evil sorcerer. You should attack the sorcerer first since he can do the most damage.



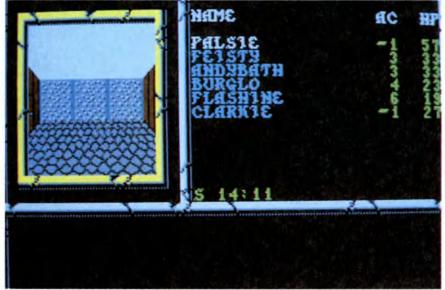
When not in combat, the most common viewpoint is from the first-person perspective. Here your party looks down a long corridor in the sewers. A door appears in the wall ahead to the right.



When the enemy characters have started to flee the battle, turn control of your characters over to the computer to hurry things along. But you might need to take control of any characters who seem idle. Sometimes the computer control is none too brilliant.



Quite often the trick to this game is knowing which doors to go through and when to go through them. A closed door is tempting, but down in these dungeons, you never know what waits behind it.



An empty room! At least, it *seems* empty. Why not scout around to find out. You can't see what lies ahead in *Curse*, so the only way to find out is to stumble onto things.



A patrol of Fire Knives comes down the corridor towards you. You have very few options except battle. So get ready, and remember to cast those vital spells.



This Fire Knife is the target for Flashine's magic missile spell. If she hits, she'll injure the Fire Knife. If not, she's wasted a spell.

Remember to try to advance your character whenever you have a chance. If you forget, you'll quickly wish you hadn't. Be sure to save the game often, even if it means swapping disks. *Curse* takes a long time as it is — starting over is a curse all its own.



The three remaining Fire Knives are backed into a corner and will certainly be defeated. At this point in the game, let the computer play the battle out, then take over again when it's time to divide the spoils.



After each victory, this treasure screen appears. We see that the party is in rough shape, with Burgle (in red) dying, but that can be fixed when the party encamps. Now is the time to distribute the loot.



Often, you'll see and hear strange sights and sounds as you travel. A voice has broken the stillness, but you don't know where it's coming from — and you may never find the source.



A strange smoky scent wafts from the rooms. Should you go further and explore, or turn around and try to stay alive? The choice is yours.

Hardware requirements: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 512K minimum memory for EGA and CGA graphics; 640K for Tandy 16-color; two floppy drives or hard drive required.

THE DUEL: TEST DRIVE II

Test Drive was such a phenomenal success that a sequel was probably inevitable. The changes in the game, however, are a surprise. Critics of *Test Drive* disliked the tedium of driving the mountain road and the lack of racing partners. Accolade has solved both problems with *The Duel*.

Now, you can race a computer opponent by selecting the kind of car you want to take on, and the skill level at which you want to compete. The computer will do its best to beat you every step of the way.

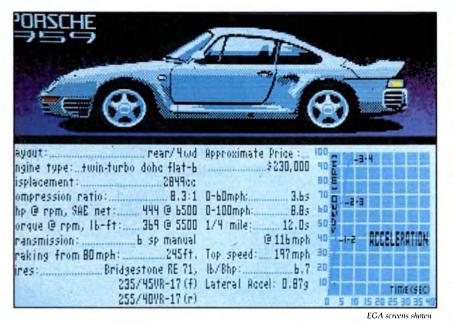
Furthermore, there's scenery. *The Duel* still lets you race down mountain roads, but also in congested traffic, in the desert, and through forests. Avoid oil slicks and fallen rocks, and keep an eye out for the persistent police.

Accessory disks *California Challenge* and *The Supercars* were released along with *The Duel. California Challenge*, the first scenery disk, lets you race from Oregon to Mexico, passing Monterey, Big Sur, the Trees of Mystery, and the Golden Gate Bridge on the way. *The Supercars* gives you five additional vehicle choices: an '88 Lotus Esprit, a Ferrari Testarossa, a Porsche 911 RUF, an '88 Lamborghini Countach 5000S, and an '89 Corvette ZR1.

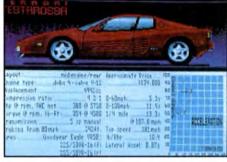
Accolade



The selection screen: choose whether to race against the clock or against a computer-controlled car.



Car #1: a Porsche 959.



Car #2: a Ferrari Testarossa.

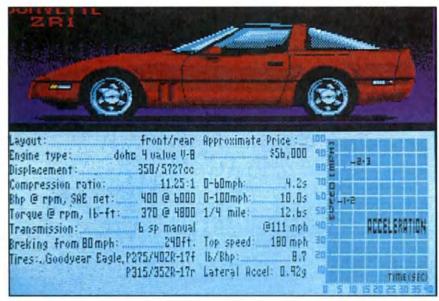
Ayout: rean/rean Spercomete bruce asine type: fmin turbo flat-b 2177,000 mg 4:2 hopkeem.dr: 258bcc 256mg/s 17.51 8-50mg/s 19.50 mg 4:2 hopkeem.dr: 7.51 8-50mg/s 19.50 mg 7.51 mg 7.51

Car #3: a Porsche RUF Twin Turbo.



The Duel is more forgiving than the original Test Drive in how close you can get to vehicles you're passing. Once you're even partially past them, you can usually cut in front of them. This minimizes head-on collisions with approaching vehicles.

Although you won't get many points for it, you can drive all the way to Mexico at the speed limit. Use this option if you just want to see the gorgeous scenery. Sure, it's an abuse of a great sports car, but it's no one's business but your own.



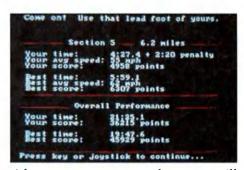
Car #4: much more than just a little red Corvette.



Your drive begins. The top right corner shows that it's 6 miles to the next gas station.

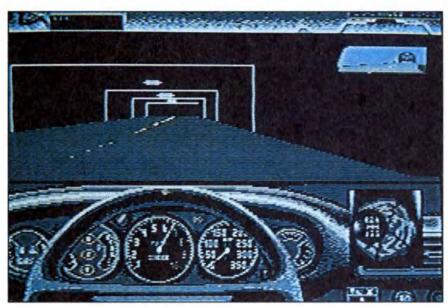


When you select "scenery" at the main menu, you can cycle through the various scenery disks. Here, we have chosen California Challenge.

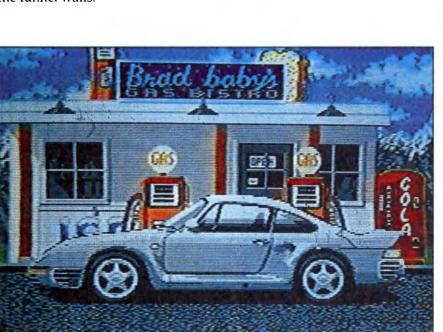


After stage one, your performance will be critiqued. Note the unflattering comment. You can expect a lot of these as you learn.

As soon as you can, go into expert mode. Here, you must shift gears according to your car's real-life gear shift. In this mode, using a joystick simulates shifting far better than does the keyboard.



Be careful whenever you enter a mountain tunnel. It's very easy to crash into the tunnel walls.



The sight of a fuel pump is every driver's saving grace. Don't drive past the gas stations or you'll lose a life.



This is the screen you want to see. You've become one of *The Duel's* best drivers.



Welcome to California. The sign on the right says it all.

When you see a cop approaching, or when your radar detects one, slow down below the speed limit. When he's out of sight, speed up again. Getting a ticket wastes far more time than judicious slowing down does.



The redwoods! The mountains! The blue California sky! All we need now is an ocean, and we're all set.



Just beyond Eureka, still in the northern part of the state, we get our first glimpse of the blue Pacific when we top this hill. If we weren't in such a hurry, we might stop for a swim.



To the right, the Golden Gate Bridge. To the left, the skyline of San Francisco.

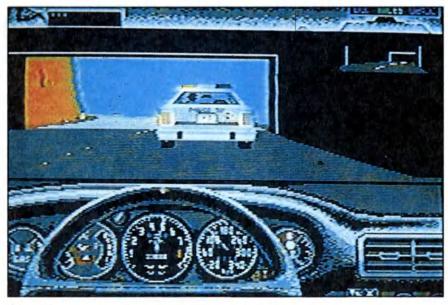


One of the best things about *California Challenge* is seeing the signs for all the places you've heard about on records. Here we rest near Monterey.

When going through mountain tunnels, try to stick to the middle of the road. It's very easy to crash into the side here. Be careful of the bridges at Big Sur because they're easy to hit as well.



Apparently, we're getting our license revoked. Too bad, but the whole trip seems worth it.



Oh — don't rear-end a police car. They don't like it, and neither does your computer.



The California state troopers have done their duty, stopping us for a minor speeding infraction. Sure, 147 mph seems high, but this *is* a Lamborghini, after all.



At the U.S.-Mexico border, the finish line beckons. This is the end of *California Challenge*. Now you'll want to start over, this time in expert mode.

Hardware requirements: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 512K minimum memory for EGA and Tandy 16-color graphics, 384K for CGA and Hercules; joystick optional; 3.5-inch disk available.

THE FAERY TALE ADVENTURE

eautiful overhead graphics and a clever, usable interface form the basis of this fantasy role-playing game. Like all real role-playing games, Faery Tale takes a long time to complete, but — unlike some RPGs — it is always enjoyable.

In Faery Tale, you play three brothers — one at a time — who must find a talisman to save their world. You begin as Julian. In fact, you can play the entire game as Julian, but if he loses his lives, one of the other two brothers will take his place and carry on the quest.

Begin in Tambry, the brothers' village, where Julian can find special items by exploring the buildings. He'll run across everything from quivers of arrows to glass vials, bird totems, blue stones, and jade skulls. Once he leaves Tambry, Julian will be attacked. Some attackers are humans, while others are skeletons and wraiths.

But the fun of Faery Tale is exploring, not attacking. Find out what's in the graveyard, then unlock the buildings of Markeim. You can discover the secret of the Black Tower, but only the brave will enter the Burning Waste to search for a hidden village.



Several important items can be found on the Buy sub-menu. Totems are essential for finding your way around. Food is necessary to keep you alive. Always start with a purchase of food.



Julian encounters his first opponent. Usually, they travel in packs — of as many as five. When Julian has defeated his foe, he can take the mace. A quiver



of arrows also lies nearby.



By using a bird totem (press F8), you get a strategic view of part of Holm. This view shows the village of Tambry, with a road (in red) leading north across a bridge.





As the adventure begins, Julian is in his home village, Tambry. Inside the tavern, he can buy food, weapons, and magical items. Many of these can also be found on defeated opponents.

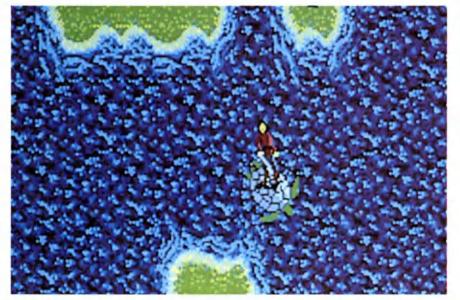


Once you leave Tambry, head south down the road and enter the graveyard. Then stand inside the fence and destroy any attackers. You can strike them through the fence, but they won't be able to get at you. As they fall, press T to search their bodies. This is how you obtain both strength and weapons.

You can find food to carry with you, but only in one location on the map. Don't take it too soon because you'll need it to explore the dragon's cave in the northwest and Grimwood Forest in the northeast. Return to Tambry often to buy food, and be sure to store plenty of glass vials.



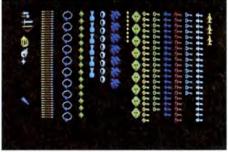
Julian stands in the graveyard, while four mace-bearing enemies gather outside the fence. He can gain strength by killing enemies through the fence. The crypt awaits to Julian's left.



After finding the sea shell, Julian can summon the turtle whenever he is near open water. The turtle is one of two modes of fast transport in the game. The other is the swan, but it comes much later.



Outside one of many forests in Holm, Julian defeats two swordsmen in a typical battle scene. Note that moving through the forests is much slower than moving across grasslands.

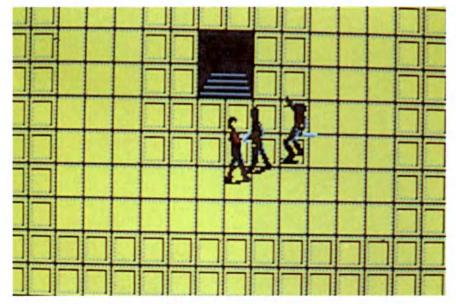


Fairly late in the game, Julian's inventory shows three gold statues (far right), and the lasso and shard (far left) already in possession. The masks are death spells; the birds are totems.

Don't be afraid to use jade skulls. They are extremely effective, especially against a group of enemies. When you kill wraiths, search them more than once. Often useful items will only be uncovered on the third search. And *sometimes* you'll turn up more jade skulls.



This view shows the route to the tombs of Hemsath. Many overhead views display locations not shown on the map in the package. Without these views, you won't complete your quest.



Julian battles two swordsmen at the entrance to the tombs of Hemsath. Inside the tombs, he'll find the bones requested by the spirit of the crypt. Remember midnight.



Inside the tombs of Hemsath, Julian comes across a mazelike series of gold doors. He'll need lots of gold keys, and making a map won't hurt. The bones are still some distance ahead.

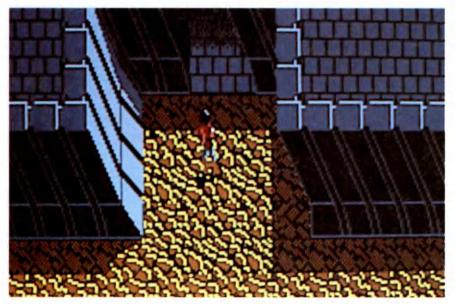


The journey through Grimwood Forest is both fascinating and frustrating. You'll need many bird totems to reach your destination. Take your time, and save the game often.

You can gain access to the turtle in one of two ways. Without giving too much away, one way is easy, simply involving exploring a distant outpost. The other way is to find the turtle's eggs, then save them from a group of rather slimy attackers.



This overhead view shows that Julian has almost succeeded in reaching the witch's castle. He has worked his way through the maze of Grimwood Forest, all the way from the bottom left of the screen.



Julian has finally reached the entrance to the witch's castle. Getting here has been a long, exhausting trip, but the reward inside is well worth the effort.



When you face the witch, the trick is to stay out of the way of the beam of light that comes from her eyes. Then, no matter what she says, take your sword and start swinging.

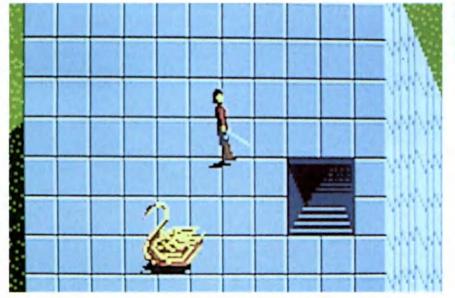


At the foot of the moutains south of Tambry, you'll find a stone circle. These circles are scattered across Holm, and with the blue stones you can teleport from one to the other.

Save the game often, especially when exploring Grimwood Forest. To minimize your use of bird totems, always save the game before you use one. Then use the totem, figure out where you are, and restore the game. You'll know your location, but you'll still have a full complement of totems.



Once Julian has the golden lasso, he can ride the swan. Here, with the swan's help, he's found an old castle. Some places are surrounded by mountains, accessible only with the swan's help.



Only with the swan's aid can Julian find and enter the forbidden keep. He must land atop the building, then go down the stairs. Once inside, he can rescue the king's daughter.



Aboard the swan, Julian flies over the great bog. Check the overhead view to find a couple of interesting locations not shown on the map, including a sage with some valuable advice.



Julian flies over the moutains on his way to the Dark Tower in the Plain of Grief. Watch out for the lava pits, and don't try to land the swan. Know anyone who likes swimming?

Hardware requirements: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 640K minimum memory for EGA graphics, 512K for CGA; keyboard and mouse optional.

F-16 COMBAT PILOT

ombat pilots live in a world where success is the norm and failure can be rewarded with instant death. Get a peek into their harrowing lives with *F-16 Combat Pilot*.

The F-16 Falcon is a good choice for a simulation. Though originally designed as a pure dogfighter, it has been adapted for a wide variety of roles. In *F-16 Combat Pilot*, you'll fly air interceptions, close air support objectives, reconnaissance duties, and deep interdiction missions. Each task requires a different set of skills and a variety of weapons.

You can also choose to command a squadron of F-16s — but you have to earn the privilege. A "newbie" pilot fresh out of flight school must first successfully complete all five of the single mission options, ranging from Scramble, a quick interception of a couple of incoming MiGs, to DeepStrike, hazardous duty deep behind enemy lines.

One of the best features in F-16 Combat Pilot is the Gladiator Mode, with which you can dogfight with a friend over phone lines (1200/2400 baud) or with a null modem cable (9600 baud). Shooting down computer-controlled MiGs is one thing, but slugging it out with a human opponent is real excitement. It's as close to the real thing as most of us will ever want to get.



By moving the cursor around inside the commander's office, you can access a number of other screens with important information.



EGA screens shown

You must complete all five missions before you can assume command of a squadron. Practice each mission in the training mode prior to trying them for real.



Check the weapons screen for information on defenses. You'll find information on the weapons' ranges, where the weapons can be loaded on the wings, and how many can be carried.



A quick trip to the aircraft data screen is always worthwhile. You'll find performance characteristics for your F-16 here, as well as for the enemy's MiG-27s, MiG-29s, and MiG-31s.

HINT

Since you must successfully complete all five missions before you can command a squadron, complete them as quickly as possible. Whenever possible, don't accept missions which will take you a long way from home. Restart the game until you get a mission with a primary target close to your base. Once you destroy the primary target, you can eject and still be given credit for that mission. You can then move quickly to the next mission scenario.

Enemy surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) can be a real problem behind enemy lines. The best way to defeat them is simply to avoid them in the first place. If you stay below 500 feet, you'll keep out of the watchful eye of enemy's early warning radar. And don't advertise your position by flying with your radar on — not even your ground attack radar. The top right indicator on the system control panel will light up if any radar is on. You can use way points to navigate.



Keep your mission in mind when choosing your weapons load. If you take more than you need, you'll just slow yourself down and reduce the amount of fuel you can carry.



Take note of the location of friendly airports and surrounding landmarks when looking at the map screen prior to takeoff. This information will be critical if your navigation system goes down.



Adding a layer of clouds from the met office screen can help you shake those pesky infrared-seeking missiles. Of course, the enemy can use that same trick on you.



When the game boots, its default mode is always keyboard control. But you can change that to mouse or joystick control by using the flight controls screen.

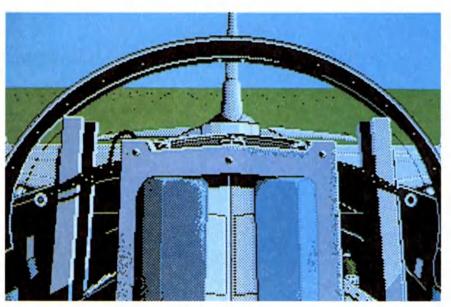
Using the Lantrin pods will greatly improve the accuracy and range of your Maverick missiles. It also automatically designates the next target after you launch a missile. This, combined with the extended range, will boost the number of targets you can hit in one pass. But on tank-busting missions, using infrared Mavericks will merely help you pick tanks out of a mass of targets, since they only lock onto hot targets. If you run out of Mavericks, air-to-air missiles work on ground targets too. Just point and shoot.



Ground targets tend to show up in bunches. Slow down and be ready to fire quickly and you'll maximize the number of targets you get in one pass.



When using your gun or missiles at short range enemy aircraft, make sure you aim in front of the target.



Incoming radar-guided missiles show up on the radar warning receiver, but infrared guided missiles don't. You may have to use the left, right, and rear views to find them.



Engage enemy air targets at long range with advanced medium-range air-to-air missiles (AMRAAMs). This will put them on the defensive and lets you close in for a Sidewinder shot if needed.

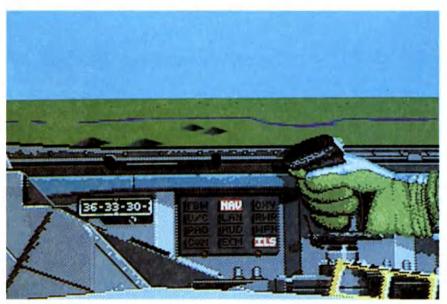
Using the automatic landing feature can reduce the number of planes you lose. But you can only use it as you approach a runway that's equipped with an instrument landing system (ILS). Slow down to less than 300 knots and get below 2500 feet. Then get a list of airfields and cycle through the list for the closest one. Contact the airfield and request a ground-controlled approach (GCA). They will usually guide you to a runway with ILS. Once the ILS becomes active, you can switch to automatic landing.



The secret to a good guns kill is to move in close. Be ready for the bogey to reverse direction suddenly.



Automatic landing will only work when the ILS is active and other flight parameters are met. Here it is telling you to level your wings and hit the key again.



You can keep up with any system damage in flight by checking the Right Cockpit Panel. It's a good idea to check this screen often.

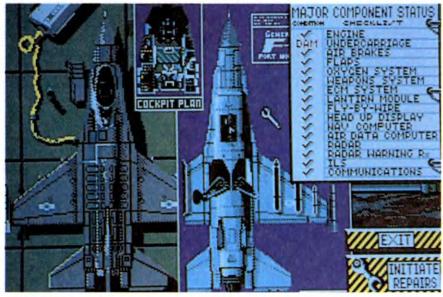


When landing manually, one of the most important things is to land with the nose up. If the nose wheel touches down first it will collapse.

Using the Gladiator Mode to fight against a friend over the phone lines is one of the best parts of this game. But you may need to set some rules before you start. When first starting out, it may be a good idea to agree that neither of you will shoot until after the first pass. Then it's weapons free. This will get the dogfight started on relatively even terms. If you don't do this, it's likely that one of you will be shot down in the first exchange of medium range missiles and the fight will be over.



Once you land, taxi into one of the hangars. Then your mission will officially be over, and you'll get your results. Just shutting down the engines on the runway won't do it.



After you land, access the damage screen from the results screen. Here you can repair any damage you may have received on your last mission and get ready for the next flight.



When pulling out of the hangar for your next mission, use the side view to make sure you're clear before turning. Nothing can ruin a day like killing your pilot without leaving the hangar.



The Gladiator Mode, which allows for head-to-head combat with another person over the phone lines, is one of the best to appear on the market. Just follow the prompts on the screen.

Hardware requirements: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 512K minimum memory; EGA, CGA, or Tandy 16-color; joystick and mouse optional.

F-19 STEALTH FIGHTER

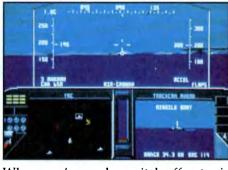
he dark waters of the Persian Gulf slip quietly by only 200 feet below you. Water gives way to rock as you maneuver to avoid the oil rigs on Iran's Kharg Island. Bathed in the blue-green light from the instruments, your fingers dance across the keyboard. With a whoosh, one of your Maverick missiles lights the sky as it races toward a huge tank farm. Miles from the nearest friendly base, you are out alone on this night to teach Iran a little lesson, F-19 style.

In *F-19 Stealth Fighter* you fly a new U.S. Air Force radar-elusive strike fighter. You can choose among missions in four areas of the world: Libya, the Persian Gulf, the North Cape of Europe, or Central Europe.

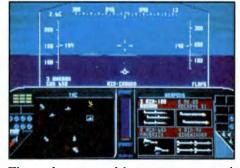
Flying missions against nations and targets that really exist is one of the most exciting elements of this simulation. Another is the fast, smooth-scrolling graphics. If you have a slower PC, you can reduce the amount of graphic detail to speed up the animation.

Most of the game options can be modified to match your skill level, so even beginners can fly successful missions quickly. By continuing to adjust the difficulty levels, you'll always be able to fly missions that are challenging, yet within your reach.

After takeoff, switch to autopilot and take care of such housekeeping items as HUD selection, map selection, weapons selection, and the waypoints setting.

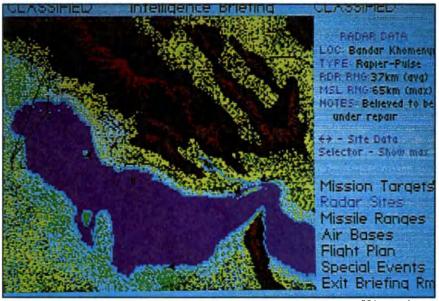


When you're ready, switch off autopilot and take control yourself. Enter enemy territory flying as low and as slow as you can. Here the F-19 is so low and slow that the stealth indicator bar is almost off the scale.



These three patrol boats encountered along the way look like inviting targets. But if you attack them, the enemy will be aware of you and may reroute your primary air-to-air target, making it difficult to find.





EGA screens shown

Before you start, always take a long look at the radar briefing screen. By checking all the radar sites, you may find that several are occasionally off the air. That's good information to have.



The AGM-65D Maverick missile is by far your most versatile weapon. It's effective against most targets, including buildings, bridges, ships, and SAM radars. Carry these instead of Penguin, HARM, or Harpoon missiles.

While not very exciting, taking intelligence photos is a very important part of what the stealth fighter does. When taking photos, it is more important to keep the subject sighted in the lower-right TrackCam CRT than in the HUD target box and cross.



Here's how to take out the primary air-to-air target. First, maneuver so you're between the target aircraft and the nearest runway. This way, he can't escape by landing while you take care of the escort fighters.



The AN-72 Coaler is unarmed, but is traveling with a dangerous fighter escort. Ignore the Coaler for now and attack the escorts with your long-range AMRAAMs.



Be careful to always ID an air target before shooting. Civilian aircraft, such as the Boeing 767 seen here, are often in the area and may wander into the fray.



Good shooting! Both missiles scored hits. But be ready to follow up any misses with guns or shorter-range Sidewinder missiles.

Don't let stray SAM shots panic you. The bad guys might try to scare you into revealing your position by shooting a SAM in your general direction. If you're not being tracked, keep cool and don't hit the ECM button.



With the escorts eliminated, you can close in on the AN-72 for a guns kill. Keep your nose pointed ahead of the enemy aircraft so you can lead the target with your cannon fire.



When you close to within four kilometers, start firing short bursts ahead of the target. Your "historical" gunsight shows where shells fired two seconds in the past would hit. Use it to time your shots.

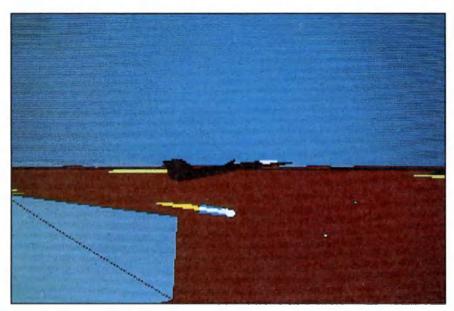


A nearby SAM radar site has locked onto you during the air battle. A Maverick missile will quiet the radar and let you disappear before the incoming swarm of fighters can find you.

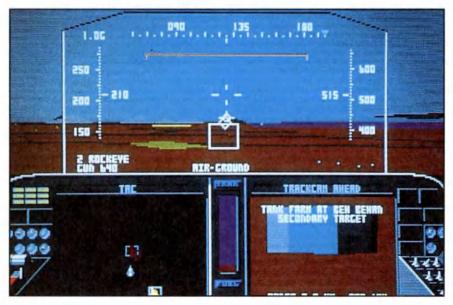


Immediately after destroying the target, withdraw low and slow, because many more enemy aircraft will be vectored to your position. Hide behind the terrain if possible.

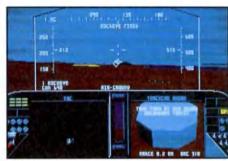
The enemy has ears and eyes as well as radar sites. If you fly directly over an enemy position or airbase, your location will be reported even if they don't pick you up on radar.



The secondary target is guarded by another SAM site. Use another Maverick missile's exceptional standoff capability to destroy it from long range.



With the SAM site quiet, you can safely move in closer to use a Mk 20 Rockeye Retarded Fall Cluster Bomb. Pull up to 500 feet and line up the target in the center of the HUD.

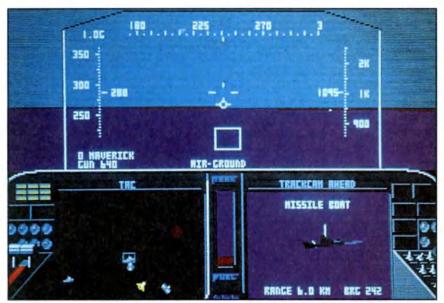


The bar at the top of the HUD indicates the range to the drop point. Keep the target centered, open the bay doors, and hit the release button as soon as the two ends of the ranging bar meet.



If you keep the target centered in the screen and release at the right second, you will score a hit. The flight-path indicator can be a little high or low without causing problems, but don't let it get off to the side.

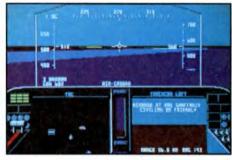
Use your flaps most of the time. They smooth the ride at low altitudes somewhat and decrease your hard-turning stall speed from 250 to 210 knots. The extra 40 knots could be the difference between victory and defeat in a hard-turning dogfight.



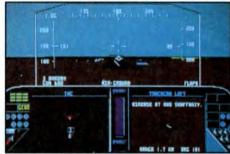
Those missile boats make great strafing targets on the way home. To prepare for a strafing attack, pop up to 1,000 feet when you are six kilometers from the target.



At three kilometers out, extend your speed brake and dive on the target. When first learning to strafe, it is best to aim a little short and then "walk" your shots to the target, using short bursts.



The key to landing is getting lined up early. Locate the strip and lock onto it with the Trackcam. Then turn away and fly at a right angle to the base until your NAV cursor is all the way to the edge of the HUD.



When you're heading back to the base, time your pullout so that when you're straight and level, your heading is 180 (or 000, as all runways are north-south), and the NAV cursor is centered. Then you should have no problem.

Hardware requirements: IBM, Tandy, or compatibles; 384K minimum memory; VGA, EGA, MCGA, CGA, Tandy 16-color, or Hercules graphics; joystick recommended.

FIRE-BRIGADE: THE BATTLE FOR KIEV

he campaign has taken too long. Despite assurances from the general staff that the vaunted Wehrmacht would slice through the Soviet countryside, it is November, 1943, and you're stalled outside Kiev with the cold months of winter just around the corner.

Fight a pivotal battle of WWII with Fire-Brigade: The Battle for Kiev. Historically, this battle between the Germans and Soviets might be considered an impasse, but you can decide the outcome once and for all. Choose your side, then deal with logistics, battle fatigue, raw recruits, depleted tank forces, and the rapid approach of winter, among other problems.

Military simulations are usually filled with esoterica which can make a game frustrating for the average player. But *Fire-Brigade* is anything but unwieldy. The variety of game options allows you to use as little (or as much) detail as you wish and still experience the excitement of the battle.

You can enter the fray at several points, and each point has unique strategic problems. You can plan your battle down to the last detail, or just set objectives and let your trained staff work everything out.

Sequels are planned for *Fire-Brigade: The Battle for Kiev*, so military gamers should be enjoying themselves for a long time.

Panther Games



EGA screens shown

The Soviets and Germans coolly eye each other across no man's land in early November 1943 as the campaign begins. Will the approaching winter be the ultimate arbiter?



Whenever making or updating your battle plans, it's a good idea to conduct reconnaissance of individual enemy units in addition to relying on staff reports. Often, you may spot a fatigue factor or a logistics problem that you consider more exploitable than your staff does.



Before each campaign, you are briefed about the relative strengths and weaknesses of the enemy's forces and your own. Be sure to take note of weak points for future exploitation.

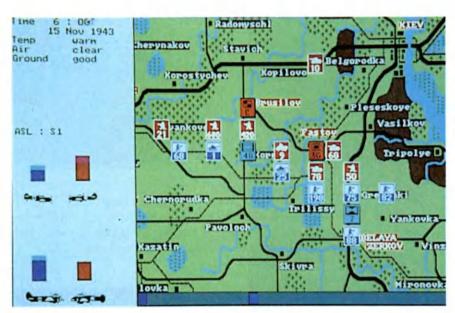


You have a lot of control and flexibility with the configuration screen. The default setup may stack the deck against you, so you may want to modify things a bit.

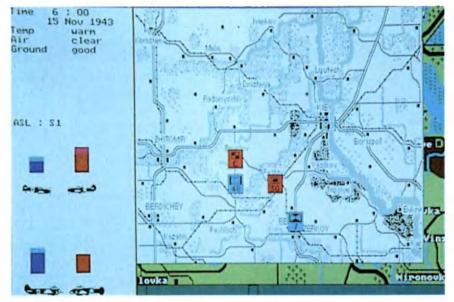


Since the Soviet Air Force has virtually no high-altitude fighters, your most practical strategy as the German commander is to allocate most of your airpower to ground and low-level attack.

Don't forget to take the weather conditions into account when you're allocating air support. Your air attacks can be seriously hampered — or even useless — if inclement weather intervenes. The campaign begins with fairly good conditions, but things deteriorate rapidly, so there's probably no advantage to keeping your air support in reserve.



Use the tactical battle screen to place your forces and reconnaissance. The screen also displays actual battle progress and movement of reinforcements.



The strategic screen displays the whole battlefield, indicating specific head-quarters, but not individual units. Logistical support can also planned from this map.



The victory/progress display shows points lost or gained since the last turn in relation to both the battle's historical model, and to the actual battle in which you are engaged.

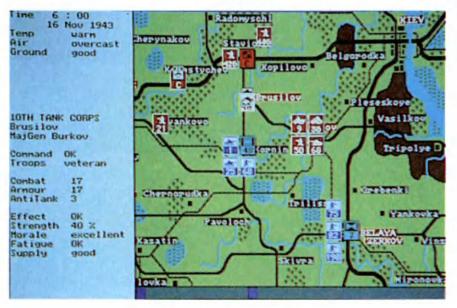


The basic battle plan in this case is to introduce a two-pronged advance. The 48th Panzer Korps, under General Balck, head toward Brusilov, and the 7th Korps moves toward Fastov.

Fatigue is a factor that should be considered crucial in your planning. High fatigue can turn a crack, elite unit into a sitting duck to be picked off by fresh recruits. You'll want to avoid forced marches except as a last resort, and you should rotate front units as often as possible.



A request for an update or review appears after a day's battle. You can modify your strategy or continue with your original battle plan. You can attend to the details yourself or have your staff take care of them.



An intelligence report states that the 10th Tank Corps is at reduced strength. Even though there are indications that reinforcements are due, the question of Brusilov's command still remains.

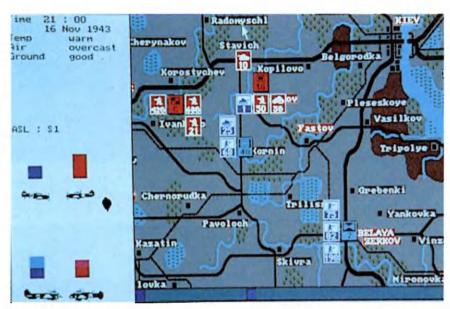


In the heat of battle, some of your units may attack neutral or already-held territories. The computer will apprise you of the mistake before the German High Command gets wind of it.

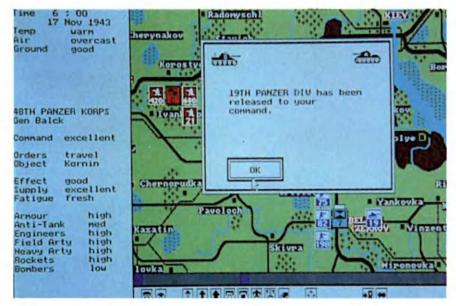


The Soviets appear to have countered your thrust by moving units northwestward. Check the enemy units' relative strength before you commit any other forces to a counterattack.

Often, you must reallocate your forces to cover potential or real trouble spots. It's wise to keep in mind that some field commanders aren't as adept at leading a large force of men as others. Take into account the acumen of the unit commander when you make a manpower transfer.



By nightfall, the Soviet units have consolidated their positions around your 48th Korps, while the 7th Korps forces are still stalled near Belaya Zerkov with logistics problems.



With the Soviets closing in, the 48th Korps are finally able to acquire some much-needed reinforcement. The question is, will the tanks arrive in time?

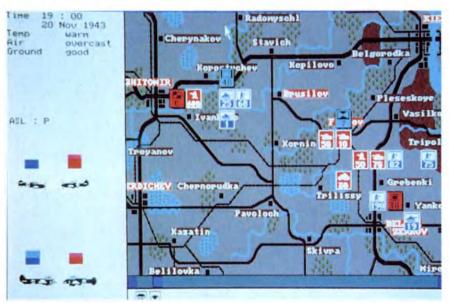


The northward movement of the 7th Korps may buy the 48th Korps some extra time. It already appears to have lured away some of the Soviet forces.



Both Korps are now engaged in full-blown action. The 7th Korps did divert the Soviets — but they were too successful. A greater-than-anticipated force deals you a crushing blow.

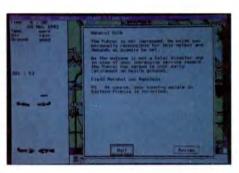
Be sure to read the historical account of the Kiev campaign included in the Fire-Brigade literature, especially if you're playing against the computer. Since the computer already knows the battle history, it usually gathers its strategic and tactical responses from that model. Sometimes a totally illogical move on your part can upset the computer's plans and give you an edge.



At the end of the day's battle, the Soviet forces move to deliver the knockout punch against the 7th Korps. Meanwhile, to the northwest, the 48th Korps is occupied by a containment force.



Even though the Wehrmacht nominally controls the central corridor, its units are in total disarray. Contrary to explicit orders, retreat can be the only answer to this disaster.



You weren't exactly hoping to receive this kind of letter. But at least von Manstein didn't include a Luger in the dispatch to facilitate your honorable departure.



The aftermath of the bloody battle: The Soviets have taken another step toward pushing the Wehrmacht away from Kiev and out of their homeland entirely.

Hardware requirements: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 640K minimum memory; VGA, EGA, CGA, Tandy 16-Color, or Hercules graphics; mouse recommended.

HILLSFAR

illsfar is the third game in Strategic Simulations' Advanced Dungeons and Dragons series. The first, *Pool of Radiance*, was a roleplaying adventure, while *Heroes of the Lance* was a pure action game. *Iillsfar* combines the two in a game for beginning or intermediate players.

Hillsfar is a series of small adventures rather than one great quest. You control the characters one at a time, creating them from scratch or borrowing them from Pool of Radiance. Part of playing Hillsfar involves studying the nenus that appear in camps, pubs, magic shops, and bookstores. There's also the riding game, in which you guide your horse over obstacles on the roads outside Hillsfar. You can also travel within the map of Hillsfar, exploring streets and entering buildings.

In the arenas, you engage in duels with fighters, attempting to defeat hem and gain fame and experience. In the buildings, you move from room o room, opening locked chests and discovering treasure. Just find the exit before guards track you down!

Hillsfar is enjoyable, largely because it's not too complex. And if searching buildings becomes tedious, picking locks is always interesting. All in all, *Hillsfar* is a good addition to the series.

StrategicSimulations



EGA screens shown

When you want to travel back to camp to save the game, or to any location other than the town of Hillsfar, you must call up this map and set a route.

HINT

When galloping along the road, don't wait too long to start a jump. The horse needs to take a step before leaping, and will need a bit of space to clear the hurdle. If necessary, slow down, especially when faced with a series of obstacles close to each other.



In camp, several options are available. You can create characters and save their progress. It is possible to conduct more than one quest at the same time by commanding different characters.



Traveling between locations means mounting your horse and jumping over obstacles in the road. This is a relatively simple arcade feature of the game, controllable by joystick or keyboard.



When you enter Hillsfar, you are shown a layout of the town. Beelzebubble is in the northeast corner, represented by a small yellow arrow. A straight-ahead perspective is displayed at the top left.

Exploring buildings is a major part of this game — but in some ways it's also the least satisfying part. You must either find a nearly endless supply of knock rings, or learn to pick locks quickly and ably. Remember, though, that most chests contain at least some treasure, and some will at least replace the knock ring you've expended.



When you approach a building, you have the option of entering. Here, a pub awaits, and — like any stalwart fantasy fighter — Beelzebubble will enter and drink his fill.



Inside the pub, a number of options present themselves. If Beelzebubble listens to some gossip, he can pick up some valuable combat information.



As you wander the streets of Hillsfar, you will often be approached by other characters. Some offer their services; others, like this one, want to show you magic. A brief hint: Only *some* of the magic in this game helps you.

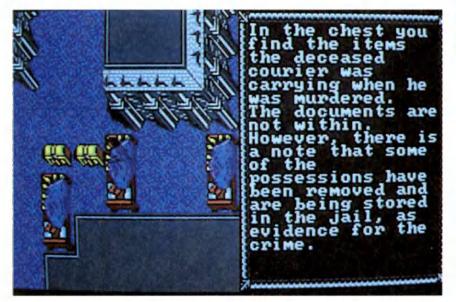


Beelzebubble has found the cemetery (shown by the yellow arrow in the southeast corner of the town). His goal is to enter and find some documents carried by a murdered guild member.

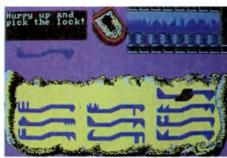
Whichever character class you choose for your adventurer, be sure to seek out the appropriate guild as soon as possible. The real key to making your way in *Hillsfar* is to hook up with the guilds. The guild masters are the ones in charge of individual quests. Find your guild, and visit the master as often as you can.



Inside the cemetery, as with all buildings in Hillsfar, you must search through a series of rooms. Open or pick the locks of any chests you run across. Eventually the guards will find you, so hurry.



Beelzebubble has found the chest containing the evidence he was looking for, but he must now find his way to the jail to collect further clues.

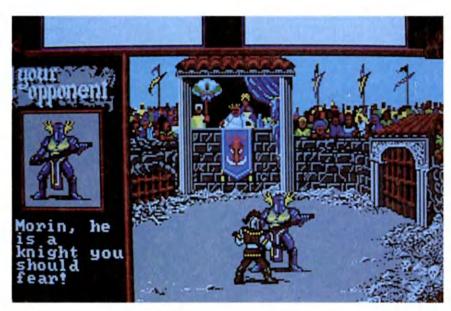


Hillsfar's lock-picking phase is challenging and interesting. You need a thief to help you pick locks (unless your character is a thief), but there is little time, and no guarantee that all the picks will fit.



Beelzebubble is the character in blue in the middle of the picture. Running up behind him is a guard. Our hero must find the exit to the cemetery before he is apprehended, or he will lose all his gold.

Hillsfar's only combat occurs in the arena. You have two ways of getting there — voluntarily or by force. Visit the arena as often as possible, but at your discretion rather than someone else's. Head back to camp to save the game before you step into the arena, though. And in the pubs, pay attention to the comments about the fighters. You'll hear some extremely valuable clues about winning.



Whether you enter by choice or by force, the arena is where you'll do most of your fighting in *Hillsfar*. Beelzebubble faces Morin, a knight not exactly renowned for showing mercy.



Back in camp after finding the documents, take stock of your character. Beelzebubble now has 4960 gold pieces, 4500 more than before he completed his quest. He's at level 5. Now it's back to Hillsfar for a new quest.



Enter all the shops you can, and talk with whomever will talk to you. The owner of this bookstore gives you an extremely valuable piece of information.



After getting caught raiding a temple, the guards threw Beelzebubble into the arena against Ottis. So far — as the strength bars at the top of the screen indicate—our hero is getting the upper hand.

Don't bother venturing beyond Hillsfar until you are given a quest that makes it necessary. Then be prepared to lose both your horse and your money to bandits. Plan for this loss by depositing most of your money in Hillsfar's bank before you leave. And if you get lost, look for a hidden path.



When you're ready to venture beyond Hillsfar, the marked roads aren't the only possible routes. Use the cursor keys to spot other possibilities, and follow them if you're sure of your strength.



The walls inside the big tree at the end of the hidden trail look different from the walls in other buildings. But you can explore and find chests as usual. Just make sure you get out while you still have your gold.



On the longer roads leading from Hillsfar, the jumping obstacles are often higher and larger. These require much better timing than the small obstacles leading from your camp to Hillsfar.



Inside the trading post, you can buy a new horse and get information from the trader. If your horse has been stolen — you can walk back to Hillsfar — but good luck!

Hardware requirements: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 384K minimum memory; EGA, CGA, or Tandy 16-color graphics; two floppy drives or a hard drive required.

KING'S QUEST IV: THE PERILS OF ROSELLA

ust off your knowledge of mythology and fairy tales — you'll need it to help a princess in *The Perils of Rosella*, the most recent installment in Sierra's *King's Quest* series.

Great adventurer King Graham lies near death, and his daughter Rosella resolves to save him. The powerful fairy Genesta would help, but Genesta's magic talisman (and life blood) has been stolen by Lolotte, an evil fairy. Rosella, disguised as a peasant, is left alone in faraway Tamir.

Rosella actually includes five separate quests. The princess must find three items for Lolotte: a unicorn, the hen that lays golden eggs, and Pandora's box. Then Rosella has to steal the talisman within the 24 hours before Genesta dies. And unless she can find the magic fruit that grows somewhere in Tamir, King Graham will also perish.

But a princess such as Rosella can use her wits to outsmart evil fairies. When threatened by angry dogs, she throws bones. And when faced with frogs, she knows how to pucker up.

Rosella is a charming blend of old myths, legends, and *The Wizard of Oz*. The lovely graphics and musical score (by award-winning composer William Goldstein) guarantee many happy hours for game players.

Sierra On-Line



EGA screens shown

Once you've found the golden ball, it's a small matter to meet the frog over by the pond. He's not exactly the prince of your dreams, but he does give you something — and it's not warts.



It's an old saw to adventure game players, but you need to save your game progress often. There are many, many random deaths ahead for the poor girl, and you don't want falls, ogres, dogs, mummies, sharks, trees, or drownings to undo all her hard work. Saving games also prevents a lot of backtracking if you get into a scenario without the necessary items to complete it. You only get one chance in some scenes.



Like any well-bred girl, Rosella's task while visiting the seven dwarfs is to tidy their little house. Her only payment should be a hearty bowl of soup, so return any item of value to the dwarfs in their mine.

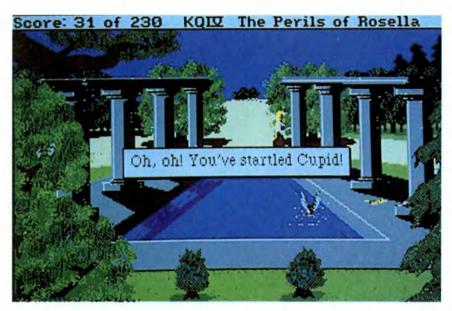


Lolotte's goons will give you a quick trip to the fairy's dark castle. Then Lolotte makes her first request, a unicorn. You'll also meet Lolotte's son, Edgar, whose complexion is the envy of toads everywhere.



There is an exchange of gifts to be made early in the game. The minstrel should find another career, and Pan seems less than enchanted with his flute. Find a gift to make the minstrel happy, then give his lute to Pan.

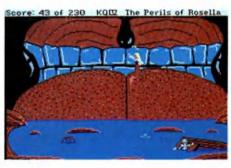
There's another round of gift-giving involving the fisherman and his wife. You need something from which he makes his livelihood, but you must make sure he can retire in comfort. Your inventory should contain some pretty valuable things, along with some grubby ones. Anything you *can* pick up you should, no matter if it crawls in the dirt or shines from the walls of mines.



You may have to visit the pool more than once before Cupid shows up. Once he begins bathing, you should come out of hiding. He'll be so flustered he'll leave behind his bow and love-tipped arrows.



Genesta's fairy abode is on an island west of Tamir. There's no need to disturb the dying fairy, but this lovely peacock will give you a gift you'll need before too long.

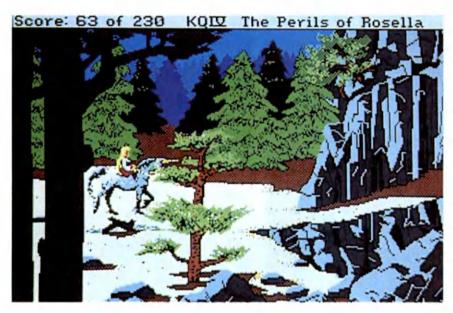


The whale only appears once in the game, but you'll need to find him — or let him find you. It's a little tricky climbing his slippery tongue. Try walking diagonally right to left, then use your feather to tickle his tonsils.

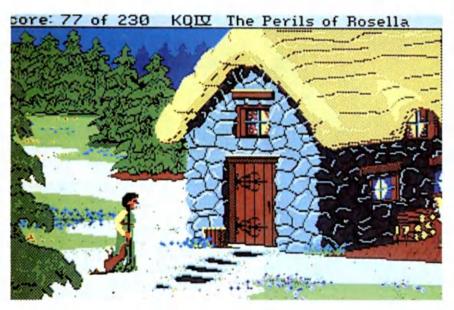


For a deserted island, there is a lot of activity here. A feathered friend will leave you a whistle if you treat him well, and blowing the whistle will provide you with transportation back to Tamir. But explore first!

You don't think the waterfall's just there for show, do you? Though you lack the strength to swim behind it in *human* form, you've got something in your inventory that will help you transform. Behind the waterfall is a long cavern. Your lantern doesn't throw much light, but persevere. There's a light at the end of the tunnel.



Once you've befriended the unicorn, ride him using the golden bridle (sidesaddle, of course). When you deliver the unicorn to Lolotte, she'll give you a second task, finding the hen that lays golden eggs.



As everyone knows, a giant stole the hen. Tamir doesn't have a giant, exactly, so try the ogre's house. Approach the house from the side, and enter after the ogre's wife. Be sure to check upstairs for a valuable tool.

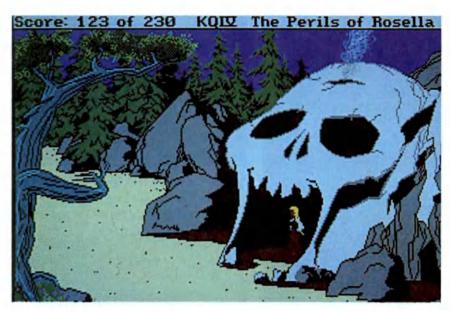


That's not a stick near the magic fruit—it's a deadly snake. Hypnotize it with your flute. But move quickly after you'vestopped playing. The spell won't last long. Then leave the swamp.

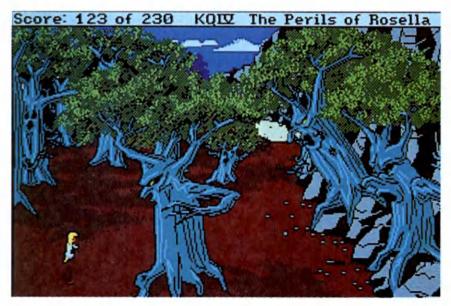


Lolotte promises you a reward if you bring her Pandora's box, but don't hold your breath waiting for treasure. Edgar's looking at you with soulful eyes. But even though he seems like a nice guy, he's more of a curse than a reward.

The scenario after dark in the haunted house really disrupts the continuity and basic logic of *Rosella*. It's bad enough that few people would think of grave robbing to appease ghosts, but Rosella also lacks a shovel with which to dig. You don't have to worry that you've missed getting the shovel somewhere else — it's in the mansion, in a secret room. To find the hidden chamber, search each room thoroughly. You'll see the latch to the room only after a series of carefully worded examinations.



Like the Graiae in Homer's *Odyssey*, the witches who live here share a single eye that they pass between them. You need to grab the eye without ending up in hot water — the stewpot. Return later for a bribe.



Remember these trees from *The Wizard of Oz*? They'll tear you limb from limb and keep you from the witches' lair unless you can threaten them with something they fear. You don't have any fire. How about an axe?



Return to the mansion after dark, and you'll find it inhabited by ghosts. Go out to the graveyard, find the tombstone that matches the ghosts, and dig up an item to give them.

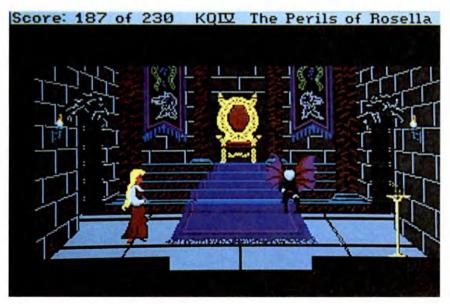


The correct tombstones aren't difficult to find, but don't try to dig up more than one gift at once. The grave will be empty, and your shovel might break. And you don't need to worry about the zombies if you have your scarab.

OK, Lolotte's dead, and you only have few minutes to get to Genesta. But since you won't be coming back to the castle, you must get the magic fruit and the items you found for Lolotte (all of them) before you leave. Search the castle freely. The henchmen are glad Lolotte's dead, and Edgar's not shedding tears either.



The last ghost will lead you into an attic. Search the trunks for sheet music. Then go up the stairs of the secret room to play it on the organ. The music will dislodge the key to the crypt. Pandora's box is inside the crypt.



Don't despair when you're locked in the castle. Lolotte's son has a good heart (if an ugly face). Escape when he gives you the key, and go to the second tower. The henchmen sleep soundly, but don't step on this rug.



Sneak into Lolotte's bedroom in the early hours of the morning. Cupid's love-tipped arrows have an unfortunate effect on the evil fairy, but there's no other way to grab the talisman she is wearing around her neck.



With time running out, you need to beat a hasty retreat to Genesta's bedside. Her strength will return quickly, and she'll be able to transport you back to your father's bedside.

Hardware requirements: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 512K minimum memory; VGA, EGA, MCGA, or CGA graphics; mouse or joystick optional; supports AdLib, Roland MT-32, and IBM music cards.

THE MAGIC CANDLE

ong ago, the powerful demon Dreax was imprisoned in the Magic Candle, a taper which burns eternally, yet never melts. Dreax has brooded for centuries, plotting escape and revenge.

Now news arrives in the court of good king Rebnard. The four and forty guardians of the Magic Candle have vanished and the candle has begun to melt. If the flame goes out, Dreax will be freed. A band of stalwart questers sets forth to locate the legendary *Zirvanad*, a spell that can reimprison Dreax forever.

In *The Magic Candle*, you first choose the six members of your questing party. Each character has a "skill level" in everything from spell-casting to hunting, which increases with experience and training. There are dozens of commands available, allowing you unusual flexibility and realism in controlling the daily lives of your characters. But only those commands which are relevant to a given situation appear on the screen at any one time.

This kind of sensible attention to detail makes *The Magic Candle* an outstanding fantasy role-playing game. Graphics are fine, game-play is smooth, and the colorful world of Deruvia is appropriately vast.

Mindcraft

May 4 Light
10:40

Level 2 1000

Days

Party1 n

W + 2

Castle

Lukas 0:k
St:35 En:98

St:35 En:98

Before setting forth on his quest, Lucas needs to get his marching orders from King Rebnard, in the throne room.

HINT

After you've collected all the hints available at Rebnard's palace, you'll wisely conclude that the first destination in your quest should be the nearby city of Pt. Avur. While you're there, be sure to buy supplies, visit the library, converse with the townspeople, and see what gossip you can pick up at the local tavern. Take a high-charisma person along with you to the latter location.



Your quest begins in the Knights' Room of King Rebnard's castle, where you select five companions from 12 candidates. There are two wizards available; include both for maximum magical power.



You can examine each candidate's qualifications in great detail. Select one for his high charisma rating and use him for starting conversations with strangers or haggling with merchants.



The servant Beratt knows a secret, but you can only talk to him during one time of day. Ask the palace guards about his schedule. Have plenty of charisma handy when you approach him — he won't talk to just anyone.

After doing the basic tour of Pt. Avur, you must decide what to do next — the lands of Deruvia are vast and varied and there is no single right way to pursue your adventure. If you're playing the 1000-day scenario, however, you might want to linger a while in Pt. Avur. Seek employment to augment funds, increase powers in training schools, and have the wizards memorize more spells. This strategy will give you time to become comfortable with the game's many commands. And every action will come in handy when you do venture into the perilous countryside.



Rebnard's castle is full of guards, servants, and courtiers. Explore each of its three levels thoroughly. Question everyone and take *detailed* notes of any information, and the name of the person who gave it.



Upstairs in the castle are two locked bedrooms. You must prove you have business with the occupants before the doors will open. Remember to knock on any locked door — except in dungeons, where a kick is more appropriate.



If you must camp in the wilderness (or, as here, when you find a city's gates closed for the night), always leave someone on watch. When that person runs low on energy, relieve him so that he, too, can get some rest.



In combat, have your wizards "recall" a spell and your warriors "draw" their weapons. Then "walk" into a sound formation. Keep wizards out of the front rank — they're lousy fighters and too valuable to risk carelessly.

If there are two wizards in your party, you can "double-team" them in combat. Have one wizard armed with his most destructive spell, and arm the other one with an energy-enhancing spell. When Wizard No. 1 gets weak, Wizard No. 2 can zap him with a rejuvenating jolt. In many combat scenes, this works better than having both wizards hurling combat spells and quickly losing their energy.



Once you've vanquished your foes, be sure to inspect each corpse for hidden loot. This is a very simple way to pick up some extra change, and in this game you can never have enough money.



You can increase your finances by visiting the gaming tables. Your odds of winning seem 50-50, for the first bet or two anyway. You can make a lot of money fast with a lucky bet. Or lose everything....



The monks in the library at Pt. Avur have much knowledge. Be sure to inquire about "hoyam essence" and ask Father Orbonn about the Zirvanad.

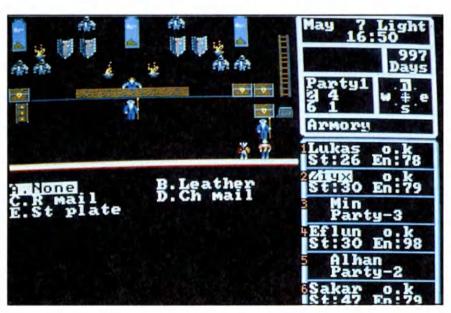


Bribing the commandant of the port's garrison will get you a special pass for entering restricted areas. Let Min (if he's in your party), or someone else with high charisma, carry the pass.

"Charisma" in *The Magic Candle* is not a political or media trait. It simply refers to a character's ability to interact with the people (or creatures) encountered on the quest. Always have at least one character with charisma of 30 or better (Min, for example) and try to keep him nearby when you're exploring new towns or interrogating strangers. If you have to pass up some information because your most charismatic character is elsewhere, better come back and revisit that place or person later.



While visiting a town, use the "divide" command to put members of your party to work at their special trades — its a slow but certain way to increase your supply of money.



Though your wizards are not prime warrior material, it's wise to invest in some protective armor for them. In case of ambush, it can save their lives — and therefore, possibly everyone else's as well.



At least some of your party should explore the streets at night. You will encounter characters — some of them with much to say — who prefer not to walk abroad in daylight.



While the mortal party members are going about their business, put your wizards to work learning more spells. Concentrate on the more time-consuming spells early in the game, while things are developing more slowly.

Mapping is a necessity when you're exploring. Fortunately for your sanity, the designers of *Magic Candle* have made this chore much less onerous and time-consuming than it is in some games. In the towns, a simple graph paper sketch map will suffice. There are no signs on the buildings, but each has a distinctive roof-shape and door-and-window arrangement. Once you get a few basic land-



Sometimes you'll stumble over a patch of magical mushrooms. Never fail to add these to your inventory. You can never have too many.



On the main roads (what few there are), you'll encounter some interesting and talkative characters. Unless you're in a hurry to make a rendezvous, it's a good idea to stop and talk to all of them.



Battle tactics should include choosing the right potion for the situation. Lukas has just taken a dose of "nift," which will, for a short time, protect him against physical attack.



At some point, you'll need to book passage on a ship bound for the Isle of Shandy. If your way is blocked by cargo, it's obviously too soon for you to make this trip.

Hardware requirements: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 256K minimum memory; EGA or CGA graphics.

MANHUNTER 2: SAN FRANCISCO

ust when you thought the world was free from the Orbs, they turn up again. Still trying to pinpoint and eliminate their opposition by pitting human against human, the tyrannical aliens have moved to the West Coast in Manhunter 2: San Francisco.

If you've donned the robes before, you remember that Manhunter: New *York* ended with one of the aliens' henchmen, the vile Phil, getting away. Now you've traced him to San Francisco, but before you can close in, your ship crashes. As luck would have it, you land on top of a Manhunter named Peter Brown. Appropriating the pancaked Brown's ID card and MAD (Manhunter Assistance Device), you take on the dead man's identity.

You take your cues from the MAD tracker. It allows you to view the participants in a crime, along with any other contacts. Once a location has been viewed on the tracker, it can be accessed by the MAD travel mode which transports you there instantly.

Each location must be searched completely for clues and items that might help solve the case. Of course, your main interest is discovering clues to Phil's whereabouts. But since you don't know exactly what you're looking for, you'll have to visit any accessible location.

During the harrowing cross-country trip, you find the time to record your impressions of the past adventure with the hope that, if you do crash, someone will carry on your mission.



Just as you reach the city by the bay, your ship finally gives up the ghost and you plummet to earth. Ever have one of those days?



To say you left New York in a hurry is an understatement. You and Phil both pilot stolen Orb ships, but it appears that Phil got the best of the bargain. Your ship seems ready to fall from the sky.



Looks like something soft broke your fall. The robe looks familiar, but get a load of those socks. Check the scene to see if you can pick up anything of use.



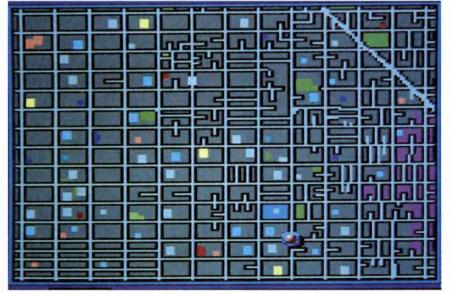
When tracking criminals and peripheral suspects on your MAD it's best to talk and the second of the MAD, it's best to take notes. Some of the target movements can get pretty complicated. One missed clue and you'll be tearing out your hair.



When you get really stumped, it's sometimes helpful to go through your inventory and try everything on selected objects in a scene. You'll often be surprised at what ends up working.



This ID card can get you into a lot of otherwise restricted places. Fortunately, the Orbs aren't very good with faces, so as long as you keep your robe on, you should be able to function as Peter Brown.



Now that you possess Brown's MAD, you have access to any location specified on the tracker or ID computer. Since you haven't received any assignments yet, travel to the Manhunter's apartment.



Be it ever so squalid.... Actually, as a Manhunter you are entitled to these luxurious surroundings — and they're a considerable cut above the living spaces of the general populace.



Your first assignment takes you to the Bank of Canton, where a couple of gruesome murders have been committed. Search this office thoroughly, including the body.

Don't get frustrated if you can't get into certain locations. Many places can only be entered later in the game, even though you may already be able to access them through the MAD.



What you first thought to be a tattoo turns out to be a brand of some sort. Could the dragon motif mean that one of the Chinese feudal gangs has survived all these years?



You find yourself thinking that it's hard to believe a human could have committed this grisly murder — particularly since that's not a human tooth lying there. Has some third party entered the scene?

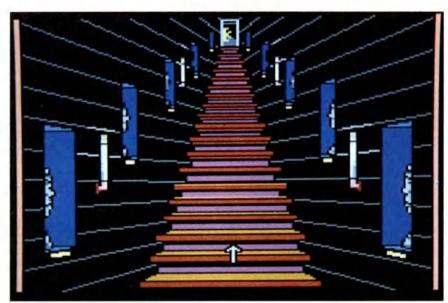


Getting inside the fountain is only part of your problem. The Enter key and good timing should solve that dilemma. But just how good are you at dancing with rats?



These must be the remnants of the recently postulated third party. Obviously, something has gone wrong with this guy's genetic structure. It could be the work of the Orbs.

On the second day, the order in which you do things is very important. After picking up the rat paw at Ghirardelli Square, you should visit the shop, the private club, and then the underground gate.



Be prepared for action when you reach the top of these stairs. If only you hadn't left your acid-proof boots at home. Before you go upstairs, you might do a bit of jewel polishing. In fact, count on it.



Strange herbs and a pipe — maybe this Chinese temple is really an opium den. Get the right number of pinches (remember the polishing?) and you'll see a face to remember.



This place looks like a scene out of *Frankenstein*. From the autograph on the creature's forehead, Phil must be involved. But why would he want human limbs?



After taking a whack at things, you find yourself inside the Wax Museum. It seems the Orbs are using persuasion instead of out-and-out oppression. But those bodies aren't made of wax.

During the battle with the rats inside the Embarcadero Fountain, you should remember to time your stomps and punches rather than just swinging continuously. There is enough of a time lag between the stomps and punches for the little critters to assume the munching position.



Yes, there is a way through this maze, and yes, you need something that sparks-spewing corpse has in his possession. But if you haven't picked up the laundry, your climb will be pointless.



Your old nemesis, Phil, has set himself up as king of the rat creatures. How fitting! You didn't expect to drop in on him, but now that you're here, why not take a photo as a memento?



Ah, the scenic vistas of Alcatraz Island. Wouldn't this be a lovely place to retire? But before you can relax, you've got to contact someone important to your case.



"Do you know me?" Well, if you were paying attention way back in the psychedelia, you shouldn't have any trouble placing this beauty. So how are you going to open the door, smart guy?

Hardware requirements: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 256K minimum memory; VGA, MCGA, EGA, CGA, and Tandy 16-color graphics; joystick optional.

OMNICRON CONSPIRACY

ith the release of *Omnicron Conspiracy*, Epyx has joined a select group known for publishing interactive adventure games that feature both top-quality graphics and ingenious storylines. In this addictive game, players must break up an intergalactic drug ring and prevent the destruction of the universe.

Parents be warned, however, that the game does include a few characters and action sequences that, were this a movie, might prompt the Motion Picture Association of America to give a PG-13 rating.

Conspiracy throws you into a sordid world of drugs, corruption, and anarchy. As the Star Police force's best cop, it's up to you to clean up the galaxy and put its drug czars behind bars. You're faced with a familiar Catch-22. If you don't search every nook and cranny and speak to every being on two pods, you'll miss important clues and valuable items. Yet if you do, there is the probability that you will become another addition to the day's fatality total. The best advice is to shoot first (with your plasma cannon set on stun), and ask questions later.



Ace is carrying a MetaCard in his pocket identified as F5. Use this credit card to purchase weapons, holodisks, weapons, and other valuable supplies.

Epyx



Search all flat surfaces, beginning with the nightstand in your bedroom, for items you will need to complete your mission. Each of the six windows surrounding the main screen display what you hold in your pockets.



To plot your destination point, enter the proper coordinates into the control panel on board the *Falcon*. Displayed are the coordinates for the planet Cron — 480117.



Withstand the temptation to spend some time with one of the more hostesses on Cron. The seductive siren charges only 50 credits, but she'll take your MetaCard and your plasma cannon, which are difficult to recover. Keep in mind that you are one of the Star Police's finest men, and as such you shouldn't be wasting government time. Besides, as the developers remind us, this is supposed to be a family game!



Your plasma cannon has two settings — stun and kill. Do not kill allies, no matter how nasty they are to you. It's best to keep your weapon on stun until you are certain that your life is in danger.

Though you are respected by all, you are liked by few. Even fellow police officers can get hostile, so be ready to zap the creatures with which you come in contact. If you're in an area where you're an uninvited guest, you'll draw fire from unlikely sources. Decide quickly whether to stun or to eliminate your aggressors because if you kill another officer — whether he's friend or foe — you'll go to the stockade for life.



After landing on Cron, you will want to report to the 6th floor of headquarters to get your orders from the chief. Follow Officer Drek to the dynalift.



On your way down to the first floor, check out the other rooms in the building. You may find something of use. However, don't dally — you have only a limited amount of time in which to complete your mission.



Behind the broken computer in the library is a passage to the good Mentant Temple (meaning there is also a bad Mentant Temple). Den Herth awaits you with valuable information.



Holodisks are a bargain at 20 credits per edition. Marry Banillo is a valuable addition to anyone's music library — especially yours!

The instruction manual says that you may want to visit the real estate office on Klein Street. Well, you may not. The coordinates provided by the realtor's computer are useless as far as the completion of your mission is concerned. However, if you have some extra fuel and are in the market for a house on the hill, check with your realtor first. He has what he thinks are *must see*'s, including an exclusive fixer-up opportunity that's simply perfect for the S.P. officer tired of life on the run.



Another informant is waiting for you inside the Mind-Zi Tavern, but be careful! Bored thugs with bad attitudes hang out at this watering hole.



After following Bellows to his apartment, be prepared to dispose of Sarbai thugs busily searching your informant's quarters. These bruisers don't mess around, so shoot on sight.



Dr. Galloway is one of the drug lords. Though he will at least be civil with you in the lab, in his living quarters he can get rather volatile.



The transporter in *Conspiracy* will remind you of the one Captain Kirk used regularly in the "Star Trek" series. It will also show you what the excellent graphics in this game can do.

After confiscating Rand's card key, you'll be able to gain access to several previously impregnable areas. Among these are Rand's laboratory and the tunnel hidden behind a wine rack in the Green Tattoo Bar. The card key you found on your bedroom table, as well as your badge, can be forsaken when you begin exploring enemy areas. This will allow you to carry items of greater value.



You will want to visit Rand Ungar, scientist and seducer. Her quarters are located at the end of the hall on Delphi's third floor.



To locate an underground tunnel, move the wine rack in the cellar of the Green Tattoo. The master computer room is in this tunnel, as well as a few robots programmed to defend it.



Proceed through the tunnel with caution and you will find the computer room behind one of the locked doors. To gain access, use the card key you picked up in Rand's apartment.



If you get zapped too many times, you'll end up a vegetable, literally. The nurse droid can only do so much, so try not to end up in someone's chef salad.

There are three ways to restore your rest level: swallow your energy capsule, find a bed (any bed) and take a nap, or die. Upon losing your life for the first or second time, you are reassembled by a nurse droid on the *Falcon*. This restores your life and rest levels to 100 percent. However, there is no need for such drastic measures, for there are plenty of beds around the galaxy to satisfy even the most voracious of sleep monsters.



CONTROL PANEL

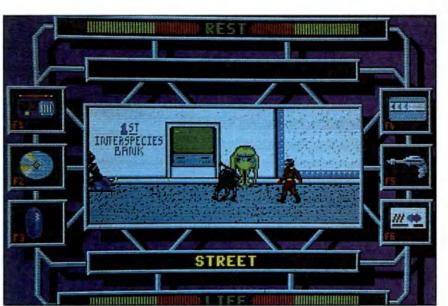
CONTROL PANEL

The controls have been blasted. All that appears to be working is the ships log and manifest computers.

The controls have been continued to be working is the ships log and manifest computers.

You'll find the tramp freighter *Blackstar* littered with corpses. Obviously this intergalactic drug ring doesn't mess around, so neither should you.

Although you don't want to end up an artichoke, don't blast innocent people trying to protect yourself. A nervous trigger finger is a one-way ticket up the river.



While transacting your bank business, you might want to start up a conversation with the friendly neighborhood frug. He likes to loiter conveniently near the automatic teller machine.



When visiting the Sarbai Base, keep your cannon on kill. Get past the thugs and you can reach your objective — the Death Ray. Destroy this instrument of evil before it wipes out the galaxy!

Hardware requirements: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 512K minimum memory; EGA, MCGA, CGA, Tandy 16-color, or Hercules graphics.

RED STORM RISING

odern-day torpedoes are like credit card bills: No matter where you try to hide, no matter how often you move, they'll always find you.

Evading torpedoes will preoccupy beginners to *Red Storm Rising*, MicroProse's rich, complex simulation of Tom Clancy's best-selling novel about contemporary submarine warfare. Though the real point in this game is to fire torpedoes and missiles at enemy ships and submarines, you'll only experience this after repeated play.

In *Red Storm Rising*, you are the commanding officer of a nuclear submarine operating at the beginning of World War III. You're assigned missions by strategic command, but essentially there is a single objective: Survive and make sure the enemy doesn't.

Select a mission from among four time periods. In 1984 Soviet warships were at their lowest level of technology, but the U.S. was limited as well. The 1988 scenarios — around which Clancy's novel is based — feature the Soviet Sierra- and Kilo-class subs, while you have the Tomahawk missile and Mark 48 torpedo. In 1992, a Soviet nuclear aircraft carrier enters the fray, along with your Sea Lance missiles. In 1996, the first Seawolf subsenter your fleet.

MicroProse

TACTICAL DISPLAY

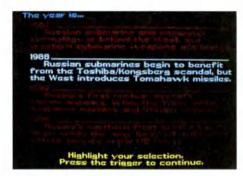
SPEED
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PAUSED - PRESS ALT P TO RESUME

EGA screens shown

The tactical display is the one you'll use most often. "L.A." represents your sub.



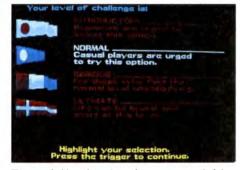
Remember that launching a torpedo is only half the job. You must also set its PAP (pre-planned activation point), or the torpedo will just continue straight ahead. Remember, too, that a torpedo has a limited range of "sight," and that it heads straight toward its PAP. Don't set the PAP at such a sharp angle from the target that the torpedo can't find the enemy ship.



You can choose from four time periods. For your first missions, stick with 1988.



There are six classes of subs to choose from. Note that the *Seawolf* (in blue) isn't available in 1988.

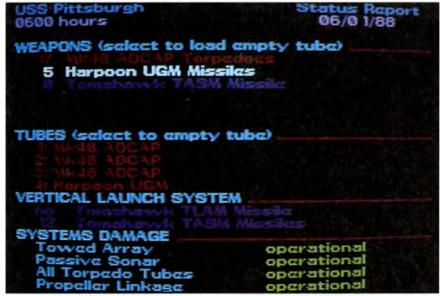


Four difficulty levels are available. Here, we'll use the cursor keys to move from normal to introductory.

Evading a torpedo is quite probably the greatest challenge to your abilities as a submariner. Read the manual carefully to learn how. Learn to use noisemakers effectively — instead of just launching them at random, make sure they will truly confuse the torpedo. And learn to use your decoys efficiently and the fine art of *knuckling*. If you don't, you'll almost certainly be sunk.



Moving at 15 knots and a depth of 230 feet, we've identified the target as a sub at a distance of 10 Kyds (10,000 yards).



Here's the status screen. We'll load our four torpedo tubes with three Mark 48s and a Harpoon.

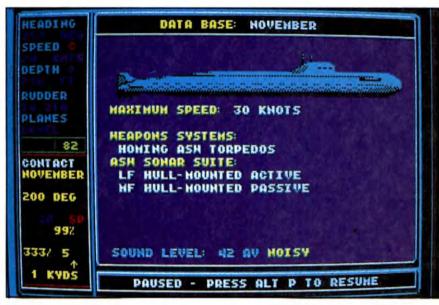


When you sound battle stations, you receive this report. Note the direction of the sonar contact (000 degrees) and the sea conditions.



This is the sea condition screen. It provides information for all ships within contact range.

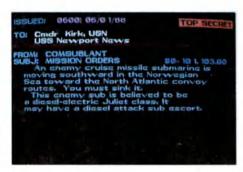
Check often to see if your towed array is still functioning. Without it, you have a 60-degree blind spot to your stern, and enemy torpedoes will almost certainly approach from that direction. Don't neglect your towed array. You'll lose it if you stop completely, and it can be lost in other ways as well.



Once we've made contact, we can access the sub's database for information about the enemy.



A torpedo (yellow) approaches. We'll drop a noisemaker to lead it temporarily astray, then launch a Mark 48 at the enemy.

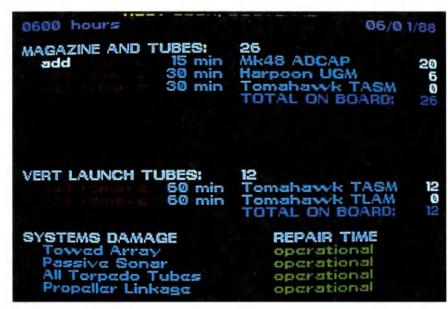


These are your orders for the battle scenario against the cruise missile sub.

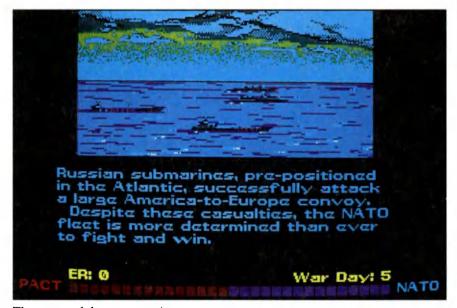


Confused? Need help? Press the Alt-H keys for a tactical analysis.

When you start *Red Storm*, avoid the temptation to switch on your active sonar and radar. This might work in training or duel scenarios, but otherwise it's deadly. Using active radar is like sending a flare into the night announcing your position. Be patient and be subtle. Use the sea conditions as weapons. You can sneak up on ships by running under the thermal layer, and evade torpedoes the same way. But watch out for ice floes — they can stop your torpedoes *and* your sub.



In port in Scotland, at the beginning of the campaign scenario.



The story of the war continues.

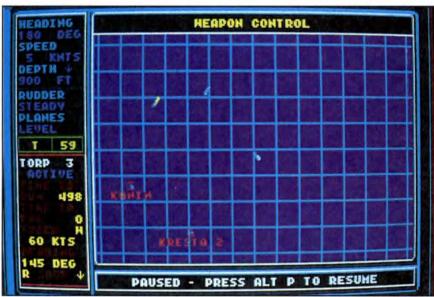


It seems we've run into some trouble. Four identified Soviet enemies are converging upon us.

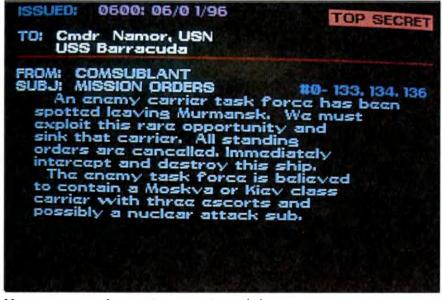


We've launched three torpedoes. One has missed, and the other two are homing.

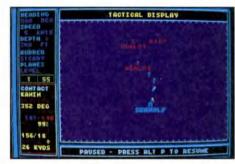
Try as many battle scenarios as possible before moving to the *Red Storm Rising* campaign scenario. This large, complex scenario requires all of your nautical skills. You will have to remember such things as extensive searching and weapons refurbishing. Move to it only when you're completely ready.



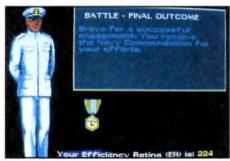
The Weapons Control screen.



Here are your orders against a carrier task force.



We're in the thick of battle against a Soviet Kiev-class aircraft carrier.



You've succeeded. And you've been rewarded!

Hardware requirements: IBM, Tandy, or compatibles; 384K minimum memory; VGA, EGA, MCGA, CGA, or Tandy 16-color graphics; joystick optional.

SIM CITY

ew computer games have attracted more attention than *Sim* (for "simulated") *City*. In its Macintosh, Amiga, and Commodore-64 versions, the game has addicted thousands, has earned a rave review in *Newsweek*, and has been adopted for classroom use.

The PC version was slow to arrive, but worth the wait. *Sim City* combines the strategy of a war game, the player-megalomania of a role-playing game, and the civics of a shelf of textbooks.

As mayor of a self-created city, you start with a few houses. In a few decades of game time, you have a bustling city. In a century, it's a metropolis complete with crime, pollution, urban blight, and unemployment.

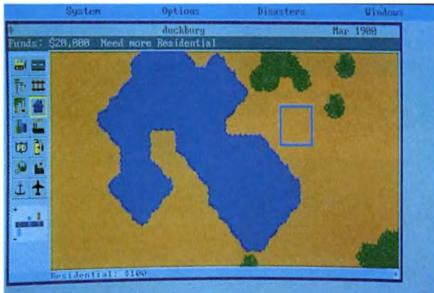
You'll have to tax, plan, engineer, renovate, and zone the land to keep your city a viable economic entity. But don't neglect the quality of life of your Sims ("simulated inhabitants"). You must achieve a healthy balance between residential, commercial, and industrial development.

If you've ever thought you could run your city better than City Hall, you can finally put your mouse where your mouth is. You'll see that – just as in real life – the stategies that form Utopias on paper never work out that way.

The state of the s

In the Maps Window, you can see 100 square miles of terrain. This is where you sketch out the broad design of your dream city.

Maxis Software



EGA screens shown

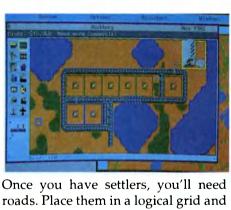
You begin with virgin wilderness. The area inside the cursor represents the amount of development you can accomplish with one click of the mouse — about one square block's worth. Normally you'll start with residential zoning.



A power plant should be your first utility. Coal or nuclear? *You're* the mayor — you decide. Coal is less efficient (and it pollutes), but a nuclear accident is a real possibility in Sim City.

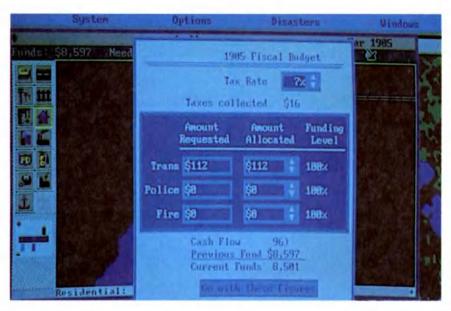
HINT

You'll constantly receive little messages from your Sims ("Need more industry!" or "Need a fire station!", for example). Generally speaking, pay heed to this *vox populi*, but sometimes you'll have to ignore the clamor for a while. If you're constructing a new mass transit system and the Sims start griping for more police stations, you can ignore them. Better mass transit can foster more growth, more tax revenues, more money to buy police stations — *and* a few parks.



Once you have settlers, you'll need roads. Place them in a logical grid and remember — it's cheaper to plan intelligently from the start than to lay roads through developed areas later on.

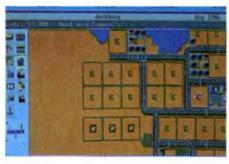
Once you've created your Utopia (low pollution, low crime, good transportation, and a high rating for yourself in the polls) don't become complacent. After a realistic period of game-time, many urban areas begin to decay. The longer you put off urban renewal, the faster the rot sets in. A good mayor plans ahead.



You'll have to establish a fiscal-year budget every 12 months. If your transportation department doesn't get 100 percent of its requested funds, your road system will start to disintegrate before your eyes.



Don't be surprised when houses suddenly appear on vacant lots and cars begin clogging the roads. *You* do the zoning, but the Sims themselves do the building, commuting, and living.



Don't neglect hooking up each new zone to the power grid. A flashing lightning bolt will remind you, and no development will take place in a zone until it's connected.



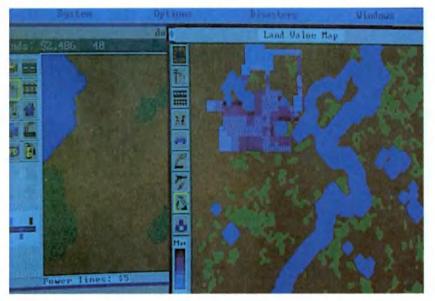
Check your polls frequently. Unemployment too high? Put in more industry to give your little Sims some jobs.

IINT

Life in *Sim City* is periodically threatened by disasters: plane crashes, floods, tornadoes — even monsters. If you choose the "monster" option, an animated Godzilla rises from the nearest body of water and stomps your industrial zones into mush. Few players will be able to resist triggering these various calamities just to see what happens. The challenge, however, lies in how you and your Sims *respond* to the disaster. A good mayor will rebuild things better than they were before.



e City Form window shows you the big picture — how your city is rawling all over the map and what areas of undeveloped land still remain.



is map shows you at a glance the pattern of property values. This is useful ormation when you're planning budgets and future development.

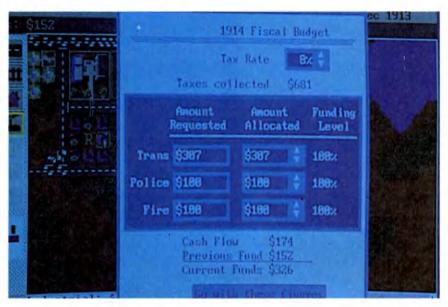


Mass transit systems (symbolized by rails) are vital to growth, but very costly to maintain. Don't overbuild unless you can pay for the upkeep.

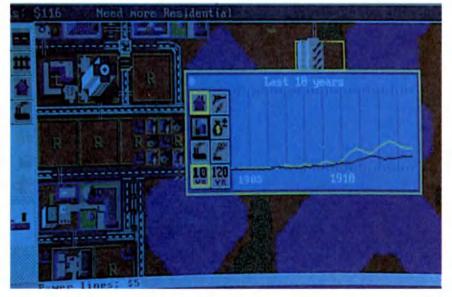


When crime statistics get high, put in a police station. And remember that you'll have to budget for the boys in blue from now on.

Once you've created a few fantasy cities, try one of the disaster scenarios, which use models of real cities and real (or potentially real) events. Three of the more apocalyptic ones are the drowning of Rio de Janeiro (thanks to the greenhouse effect and melting polar ice caps) in 2047; the fire bombing of Hamburg, Germany, in 1944; and the San Francisco earthquake of 1906. To suffer through such calamities, and then to make your city rise, phoenix-like, from its own ashes, is an exalting experience.



As your city's infrastructure becomes more complex, you'll inevitably have to raise taxes. At ten percent and above the Sims will howl, but hey, do they want a fire department or not?



The various graph windows chart the rise and fall of crime, population, land values, and so on over the span of a decade or a century. In this game, you really do acquire a track record.

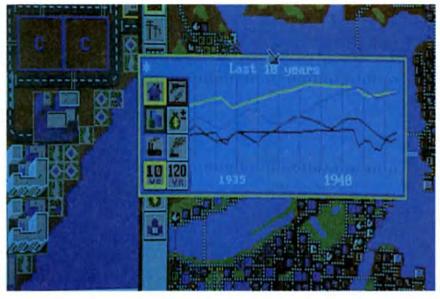


If you don't allocate enough funds to the transportation department, you'll soon see enormous potholes appearing in your highways.



Disaster! The great quake of 1916 strikes. Now you'll find out if you're a great mayor, or just another fat-cat politician.

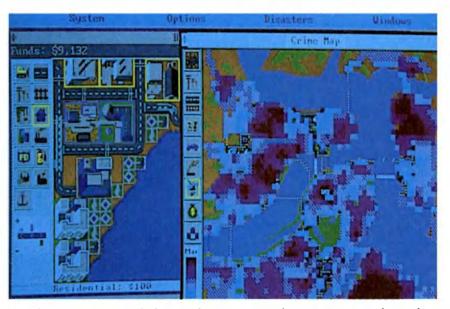
It's possible to grow beyond your means. The crime rate soars, roads collapse, power lines break, and the population starts leaving in droves. You can get a quick, massive infusion of cash on the sly by embezzling. In the Edit Window, move the cursor to the icon strip and type *fund*.. Nothing changes in the city, but your treasury is suddenly ten grand fatter. Make good use of the cash quickly — embezzling is a desperation tactic. It carries the same risk as an unpaid loan from a Mafia don.



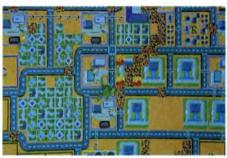
Transfer District Control of the Con

Use this map to handle power outages or to plan the location of new generator facilities.

If you prefer to tackle big-city problems from the very start, you can always load one of the programmed cities. Here you see Boston in the 1940s — a far cry from little ol' Duckburg.



Use the crime map to help you locate new police stations or plan urban renewal projects.



Need instant urban renewal? A click of the mouse brings Godzilla out of the harbor to clear a swath through the middle of downtown.

Hardware requirements: IBM PC, Tandy, and compatibles; 512K minimum memory (640K for VGA or EGA graphics); VGA, EGA, CGA, Tandy, or Hercules graphics; joystick or mouse optional; printer optional.

SPACE QUEST III: THE PIRATES OF PESTULON

oger Wilco, galactic custodian, takes off on his third adventure in the highly entertaining *Space Quest III: The Pirates of Pestulon*. Sierra's interactive games (including *Gold Rush!*; the *King's Quest*, *Police Quest*, and *Space Quest* series) boast top-notch graphics and an involving — if unlikely — plot.

At the conclusion of *Space Quest II*, Roger's ship crashed into a junk freighter. As the *Pirates of Pestulon* starts, Roger must search the freighter for a ship to fix up before he can escape.

His new space adventures take him to planet Phleebhut, where he trades with the natives and is almost ground into Salisbury steak by the Terminator. He risks intergalactic indigestion with the cuisine at Monolith Burgers, where he also drops a few buckazoids into the universe's favorite video game, Astro Chicken. And Roger goes to Pestulon, where he tries to rescue the Two Guys from Andromeda, game designers extraordinaire.

Interactive game lovers won't be disappointed by *Space Quest III*. Arcade fans will also be pleasantly surprised by the video game Astro Chicken; by the robot slaughter Nuke 'em, Duke 'em; and by the space ship shoot-em-up that ends the game.

Score: 10 of 738

Space Quest III

The state of the state

EGA screens shown

Don't bother checking out the assorted flying saucers and crushed space modules on the freighter. What you're looking for is a sleek, modern model. Something, maybe, that only needs a little fixing up.



You'll never be able to get your pod working again, so spend your time on the junk freighter finding and repairing a new ship. The only supplies you'll need are the warp motivator, the reactor, and a piece of wire. Blasting off is a breeze — unless you've forgotten to turn on your radar (to maneuver in the small room), or your front shield (to protect your ship as you blow a hole in the freighter to escape).



The only way to get to the second level of the junk freighter is to climb aboard the bucket conveyor. But be ready to stand and jump fast because the bucket will dump you all too close to a shredder. Not a pretty sight.

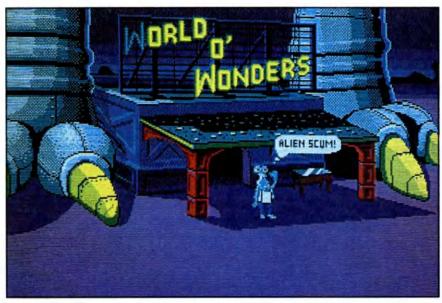


If you've mapped the first level of the junk freighter, you'll have an easier time on the second level. You'll have to find the room with your pod and use the grabber's claw to pick up the dense warp motivator.

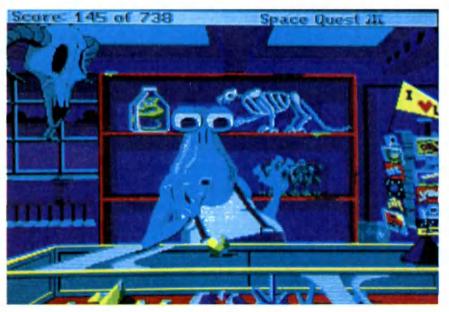


You don't really have to worry about rats attacking you (at least, in *this* room) while you search for the reactor. The exit is to the right over by the ladder. Climb up, then pull the ladder up behind you.

Once you've reduced the Terminator to so much scrap metal, don't leave Mog without grabbing his invisibility belt. But don't get too close to him. Use the orat on a stick to hook the belt. As cool as it is to be invisible, don't try the belt out. The power is *very* low, and you'll need every bit of that power later in the game.



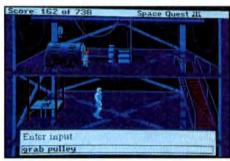
Once you've left the freighter, you're not going to get far without money. Head over to the planet Phleebhut. There's a guy there who trades with all the weird aliens in the universe.



Fester will be glad to buy your gem for 350 buckazoids. Take a look at what he's got to sell. You'll need the orat on a stick and the underwear, but don't hurt his feelings by refusing to buy the Astro Chicken hat.



The Terminator will grab you right after you leave the World of Wonders. This is *definitely* a good place to save your game. You'll also want to adjust the speed option so you can run for Mog as fast as you can.



Get into position near one of the two pulleys inside Mog and wait for the Terminator to appear. Don't grab the pulley or swing it until he's close, then let it rip. The Terminator will be recycled in the machinery wheels.

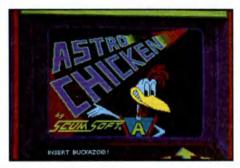
There aren't any random deaths on Ortega, as there were with Phleebhut's scorpizoids. However, you do have to watch your step or you'll end up a permanent, fried piece of the lava landscape. When the generator starts self-destructing, there will be gigantic earthquakes, and parts of the planet will disintegrate. If you get caught on one side of a wide chasm, cast your mind back to your days on the track team and pull out your handy pole.



All that fighting on Phleebhut has given you an appetite. Grab some nosh at Monolith Burgers. You know they have good food (at least for this part of the galaxy) because as you pull up, the starship *Enterprise* is just pulling away.



Look at the menu carefully before you order. You have unlimited funds, so price isn't a concern. However, you need a meal with a little something extra — like a prize, for example. Then give the nice lady your order.

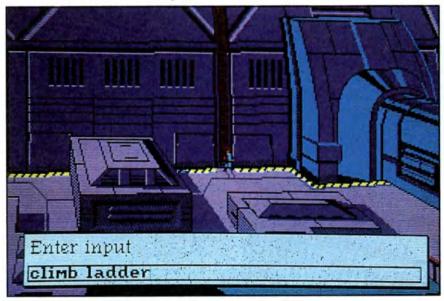


You should spend a lot of time playing Astro Chicken. Once you've landed enough fowl, you'll get a secret message that's vital to the plot of the game. Slow down the game speed to make landing the chickens easier.



As you explore Ortega (Are you wearing your thermal underwear?), you'll run across a surveyor's site. Wait for the workmen to leave, then pick up a pole and a detonator. Take a peek through the telescope as well.

You don't have time to explore Pestulon. Enter the base quickly and take the elevator to a corridor with two doors on each side. On the left is the elevator and the closet where you'll find the janitor's disguise. On the right is the accounting department and the holding cell for the Two Guys (it has a identification scanner outside the door). The accounting department is more tedious than complicated. Just make sure you go into the office in the upper right corner, and the photocopying area in the lower right.



Climb the ladder to the top of the generator, then drop in your detonator. You've only got a few minutes to get back to your ship, so remember the quickest route.



By the time you reach the base on Pestulon, the pirates have already been alerted about your arrival. With guards posted at the doors, it would take an invisible man to get through the entrance.



In your disguise as a space janitor, you should destroy all the trash with your vapor gun. The accounting department is huge, but you can't pass by any trash cans, or you'll blow your cover.



With the keycard and photo you've found, you'll be able to get past the scanner and into the cell of the Two Guys from Andromeda. Use your vapor gun to let them out of their imprisoning towers of lime jello.

In Nuke 'em, Duke 'em, it's best to stand still and let Elmo's robot come toward you, rather than meeting in the middle of the arena. If you're playing with a keyboard, there's a time lag between when you push the J or M key (to punch or block) and then see the moves on screen. Adjust your timing to make allowances. Remember that throwing a punch uses energy whether it lands or not. Don't punch blindly.



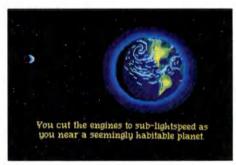
Just when you think you've won *Space Quest*, you'll get captured and end up in a game of Nuke 'em, Duke 'em. You and Elmo will be at the controls of giant robots. Your goal is the total destruction of Elmo's robot.



Once you've defeated Elmo's robot, the computer will take over your escape from the arena and blast off from Pestulon. Don't breathe too easily, though, because the game's not over yet.



You're followed by Pestulon ships that are trying to blast you into space particles. The minute a plane drops from your screen, switch from front to back shield (or from back to front). You'll have to destroy five ships.



The computer finishes the adventure after you've defeated the spaceships. After landing on a suspiciously earthlike planet, Roger will find himself without a job and looking for another adventure.

Hardware requirements: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 512K minimum memory; VGA, EGA, MCGA, CGA, Tandy 16-color, or Hercules graphics; joystick or mouse optional; supports Roland MT-32, Ad Lib, or IBM music cards.

SPACE ROGUE

ou thought signing on with the merchant ship Princess Blue was going to be a piece of cake. But now you sit by yourself in the not-so-derelict Sunracer you were investigating when the *Princess* and all her crew, save you, were destroyed by Manchi pirates.

In Space Rogue, you have a ship, the Jolly Roger, and a whole galaxy to explore. But you also have to make a living. Whether you'll want to make your money the old-fashioned way, or whether you prefer to relieve wealthy merchant ships of their valuable cargo — in short, how you play Space Rogue — depends a lot on your personality.

After you familiarize yourself with the capabilities of the Jolly Roger and realize your pockets are empty, make a stop at a space station (preferably one of the more developed stations). There you can pick up information on employment — both legal and slightly under the table. The various characters you run into might have stories to tell which could lead to treasure and honors beyond imagination.

The Jolly Roger is waiting, so pull out your white scarf and get ready to rescue a queen in distress, fight a planetary war, and maybe make a little

cash on the side.

There's usually not much to see between destinations in space, so the discovery of a derelict is sure to have the whole crew interested.

HINT

When you've earned some money, it pays to upgrade your weapons to include at least a couple of missiles. They're expensive and non-replenishing, but they pack a destructive punch unmatched by your beam weapons.



Being the junior member of the crew, you always seem to get stuck with the unenviable jobs. Still, checking on the derelict is definitely a step above the garbage detail.

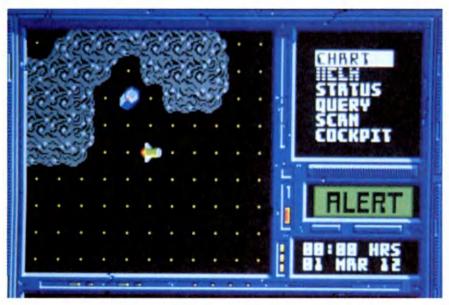


As is usually the case, the Manchi pirates appear out of nowhere, cloaked by some device only they possess. The crew of the Princess Blue never even had a chance.



After getting over the shock of the attack, you settle down and study your new ship. The main cockpit looks a bit worn, but it should be serviceable.

The black market is alive and well in *Space Roque*, and sometimes it's the only place to obtain certain items, such as a null damper for protection within wormholes. The Outpost stations are your best bet for under-the-counter services.



The navigation console is perhaps the most important station on a Sunracer. You not only plot the ship's course from here, but also perform long-range scans and monitor your ship's status.



Your first order of business is to find a well-developed planetary system and visit a Starbase space station there. You should be able to pick up some employment.

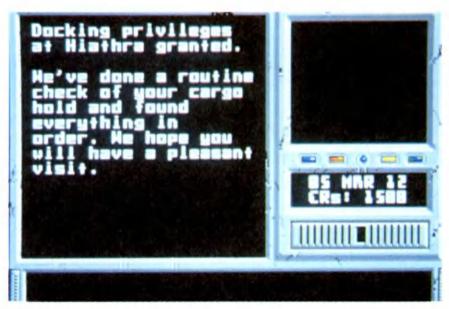


It's usually a good idea to drop out of cruise flight (C.F.) when you receive a "ship detected" warning. It could be pirates, so let's hope you took some time for gunnery practice.

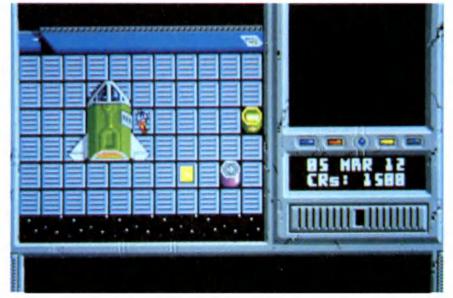


All Starbase space stations can be identified by their closed double pyramids, connected by a central hub. A Outpost station has only one open pyramid.

Keep a record of everything you come across in your travels. And be sure to note where all the stations and Imperial carriers are in case you need some quick and effective protection.



If you approach the station at a reasonable speed (five C.F. or less), you shouldn't have any problem gaining landing clearance. Just don't make a nuisance of yourself or the stations will start turning you away.



To dock at a Starbase space station, simply drop your speed to one C.F. and aim for the central hub. Docking and disembarking are both automatic.



The best place to pick up some really choice information on a station is in the bar. You nearly always run into someone with a story to tell or an offer of employment.



The latest game craze to sweep this corner of the galaxy is "Hive." Go ahead and spend a credit or two to see how it stacks up against that *Space Quest* favorite, Astro Chicken.

If you're being chased and are near a planet or moon, an effective tactic is to switch to Newtonian Flight (N.F.) and head for the nearest heavenly body. A close tangent course will enable you to use the planet's gravity as a slingshot to swing your ship away from the area.



After making a quick sweep of the station extra-vehicular activity ready room, you run into a young lady who looks interesting, but she only seems to want to talk about her latest "Hive" scores.



When visiting a space station, don't get so involved in the bar that you forget to check out the ship accessory shop, where you can buy or trade for whatever the well-equipped Sunracer pilot requires.

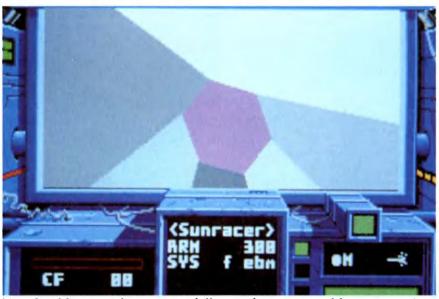


The station administrator is a reliable source of information. And, more importantly, he's the man you see to obtain your pilot's certification card.

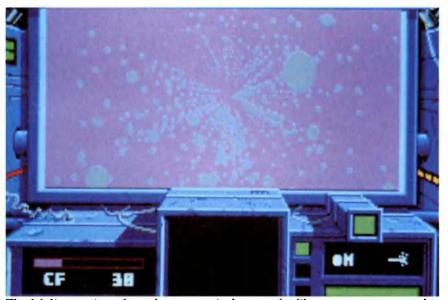


FTL (faster-than-light) space travel hasn't been developed yet, so the only way to travel from one system to another is by wormholes. They are entered through Malir gates like this one.

There will be times — such as around certain Malir wormhole gates — where asteroids and other space debris litter your path. Your ship's shields will protect you from this junk, but only if you keep your speed down to five C.F. or less.



You should approach a gate carefully, much as you would a space station. Once inside the gate, you should accelerate to at least 20 C.F. or your jump will fail.



The Malir gate interface always reminds you of a film you once saw at the Academy of Ancient Arts Festival. You can't remember the movie's title, but you do recall humming Viennese waltzes for days afterwards.



The moment your ship enters a wormhole, your speed will drop. It is essential to keep your velocity up to at least ten C.F., (and in some holes, even faster) or gases will eat through your hull.



Always be careful when exiting a gate. Other ships use the gates, so traffic can be heavy. Also, some gates are located in asteroid belts and nebulae, so you have to watch for debris.

Hardware requirements: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 384K minimum memory (512K for VGA); VGA, EGA, MCGA, CGA, or Tandy 16-color graphics; joystick recommended.

TARGHAN

rab your broadsword and sharpen your shuriken. In *Targhan*, you'll be using both weapons quite a bit. And don't forget your spells. You'll be dabbling in the magical arts as well as the martial arts. Your quest is to fight your way through the dense forest of Luneclare and make your way to the castle of the Evil One. There, your destiny — and that of Edengahrn, your village —will be decided.

Targhan is a beautifully rendered game, especially if you have VGA graphics. The scenery has that other-worldly feel so common to games designed in Europe (Targhan appears to have originated in France). But regardless of your graphics choice, it's important to have a fairly fast computer. When played on anything slower than an 8 MHz 286 machine, the characters seem to be moving through molasses. And, of course, the higher the graphics standard, the slower the action will be anyway.

To succeed in *Targhan*, you need good timing in battle and a good memory. It really pays to map your way, especially once you get up in the trees. There are so many places where your next step could be fatal, so many monsters that want you dead, that a map might be the difference between getting through Luneclare or falling by the wayside, like other warriors before you.



VGA screens show

Your first move should be to find the shuriken and the scroll lying next to it. That scroll provides a bit of information vital to success in *Targhan*.



Keep an eye out for the scrolls scattered throughout the game. They can give you directions, warn you of danger, or provide information on items you'll need. The first scroll you should look for holds the save-game message.



Obviously, without knowing the scroll's contents, your journey through the forest of Luneclare would be a short one indeed.



You'll have to be quick with your shuriken if you hope to get past the Amazons. Those stars certainly don't leave much for the vultures.



You won't get very far underground unless you're in the company of this fairy of light. Just walk close to her, and she'll follow you underground.

Don't try to battle the Amazons with your sword. You'll only end up full of arrows and no closer to your goal. Always keep a couple of shuriken (ninja stars) handy for the Amazons, but expect to get hit by at least one arrow. It's practically unavoidable, since these women are really fast with a bow.



The best way to climb up or go down a rope is to simply jump at it, then push up on your numeric keypad or joystick. You can then go up or down the rope as you wish.



It's best not to let this guy get too close. If he does, you may overshoot him with your sword, while he can still chop you up with his scimitar.



This guy with an axe is pretty clumsy, so you should be able to outmaneuver him. Just wait for him to come to you, and you can beat his relatively slower axe.



It's important to save the game as often as possible. You must seek out these statues and kneel in subservience to them. They'll save the game once you've begged.

Don't go down one of the wells right away. If you do, you'll find yourself in the dark. Instead, journey on until you find a fairy. She'll accompany you down into the well and provide illumination for the impending battles.



If you have found a statue of the true god of Edengahrn — not a false idol — you'll be allowed to save the game.



Enjoy the peace and quiet up here while you can. Soon, there will be so many dwarfs running around, you'd think your name was Dorothy.



You can't seem to get a break. No sooner have you hacked up one munchkin than there's another waiting to give you a major pedicure.



There are items off-screen to the right that you'll need. To get to them, jump off the rope to the left, jump to the next platform, and then take a leap to the right.

The tree dwarfs are pretty feisty, and they don't make friends very easily. The best way to fight them is just to wait and let them come to you. Most of them will go down after four swings of your sword. A couple of them, however, are tricky and will get close enough to duck under your swings.



After replenishing your energy from the bottle you found earlier, save the game once again at this idol. Then go on to the castle.



This wizard seems to want to play games with you right now, but remember that you'll see him again later. He won't be playing games then.



They must have had a real Texas-style barbecue here. After getting over the shock of seeing this Mesozoic monstrosity, be sure to pick up that shuriken.

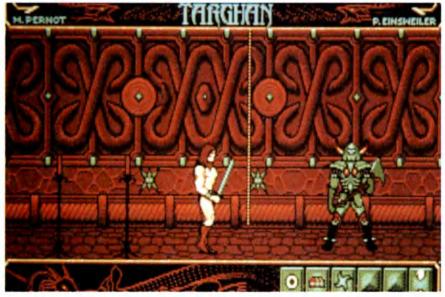


The giant with that prehistoric Louisville Slugger looks tough, but if you soften him up with the ninja stars, then go in hacking, you should have no problem.

When you're up in the trees, you'll often find that the most direct path to something you need isn't always the best. You may have to experiment with different jumping-off points — especially from one platform to another — before you can avoid a possibly fatal plunge.



You really made quick work of that troublemaker. Everywhere you turn, maniacs are trying to cut you down. Makes you wonder who you may have offended.



The armored guards in the castle aren't nearly as formidable as they appear. They're slow, clumsy, and will walk right into your attack. Just wait for them to come to you.



You'll want to be sure to go down this rope. Something extremely important to your quest awaits you at the bottom.



Don't delude yourself about your chances of fighting this little cutie. If you have the energy, go in, grab the medallion, and make a run for it. You can stand a little singeing, can't you?

Hardware requirements: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 512K minimum memory; VGA, EGA, CGA, or Hercules graphics; joystick optional.

UNIVERSAL MILITARY SIMULATOR: CIVIL WAR AND VIETNAM SCENARIOS

hen it first appeared in late 1987, *Universal Military Simulator* was hailed as the finest war-gaming program devised for personal computers. Powerful and flexible, it permitted you to re-fight several crucial historic engagements (Waterloo, Gettysburg, and so on) with you commanding either or both sides. While not a new idea, *UMS* had style and believability, plus it fulfilled armchair generals' fantasies.

UMS has been updated by two new scenario disks: *The Civil War* (Chattanooga, Antietam, and Shiloh) and *Vietnam* (battles in the Central Highlands against North Vietnamese regulars). These are *data disks* only—the original *UMS* is needed to run them.

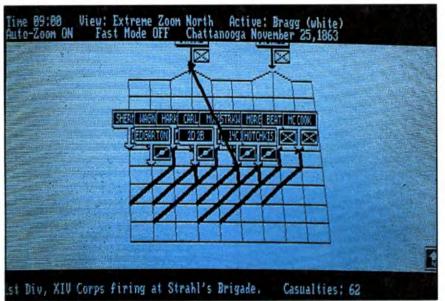
The Vietnam scenarios contain long-range artillery and air support units. They are fought on a down-in-the-mud tactical level — squad against squad, the with the action unfolding in brief, tense increments of time. These are the first pre-programmed *UMS* scenarios to incorporate these features.

Anyone who enjoyed the original *UMS* will surely want to acquire these meticulously researched updates.



In the Chattanooga scenario, the rebel flanks, especially the left, are vulnerable at the start. Reinforce them quickly from units in the center.

MicroProse UK

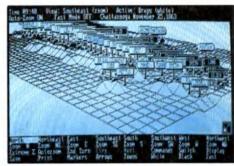


EGA screens shown

Muzzle-loading artillery can be murderous, and the Union side always seems to have so much more of it. The Confederate player should expect galling losses until the range closes.



The Vietnam scenarios contain a number of instructive subtleties. In jungle conditions, for instance, you may find that the North Vietnamese mortars — well hidden and registered with pinpoint accuracy — actually do more damage than the lavish high-tech firepower available to the American side. This can be very frustrating ... just as it was in reality.

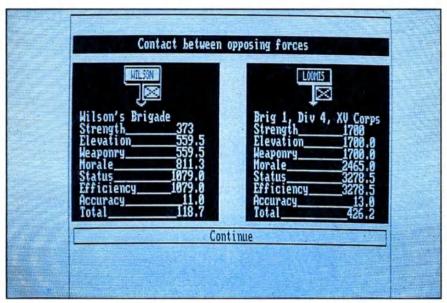


The zoom mode gives you powers of observation that real generals can only dream about — use these viewing options frequently to plan your tactics.

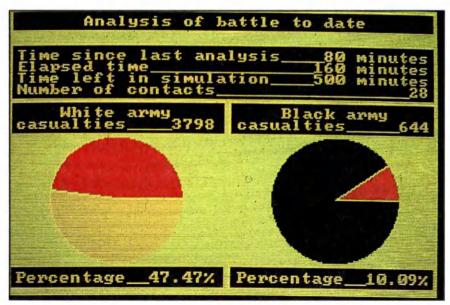


The computer simulate's each general's style with remarkable accuracy. Here, General Grant is trying a double envelopment of Bragg's army.

Some players may find that Civil War artillery seems almost *too* lethal. In some simulations, Yankee artillery superiority kills so many rebels than the game is all but decided before the two sides really grapple. If this bothers you, go into the editing program and change the default accuracy factor for ranged weapons ... or just add more cannon to the Confederate side to even things up.



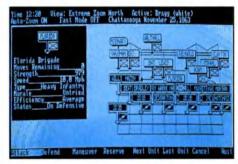
Battle results are determined by the computer on the basis of seven factors. You do not have to view this information each time there is a contact, but it's always available.



After each phase of movement and combat, you'll see a graphic analysis of the entire battle up to that point.

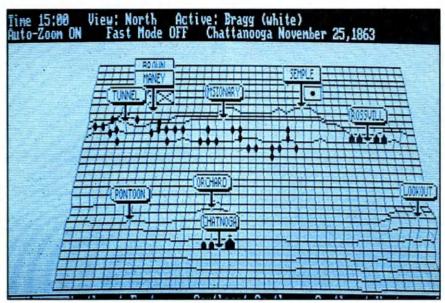


Normally, combat results are displayed this way. Pay attention to "morale." A unit with poor morale should be pulled out of line and put into reserve as soon as possible.

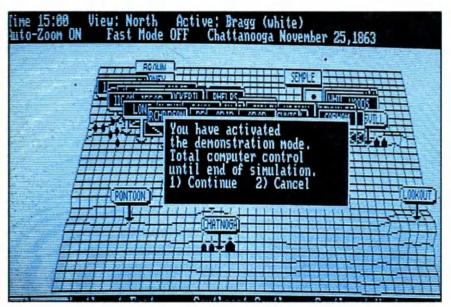


In the command mode, you issue orders to each unit in turn. If you change your mind, use "last unit" to back up through as many units as you like.

The new scenario disks open up some intriguing possibilities for acting-out historical might-have-beens. What if Lee, instead of the incompetent Braxton Bragg, had been in command at Chattanooga? What if the French had enjoyed the same kind of air support at Dien Bien Phu as the Americans did 15 years later? You can easily program these and hundreds of similar possibilities, thanks to the *UMS* system's flexibility.



The bottom row of menu options is mostly toggles. For purposes of study, you can remove and replace all the symbols on the screen, as desired.



At any time, in any simulation (including the custom ones), you can press "control D" and the computer will take over, playing both sides until the battle is finished.

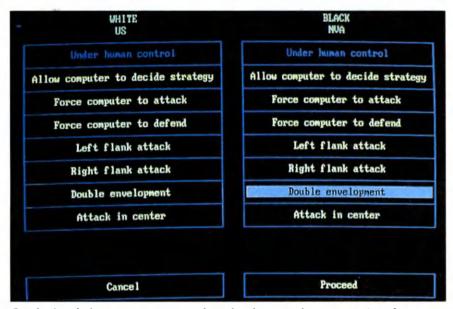


The final analysis sums up the entire battle. If you wish, you can print this and save it as a permanent record of your victories and defeats.

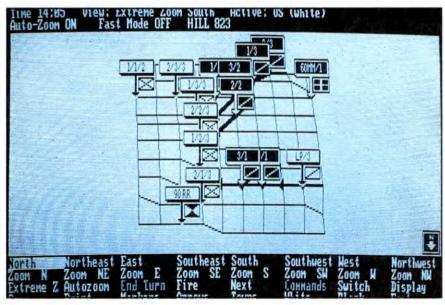


To access the two new scenarios, select "read disk" from the main menu.

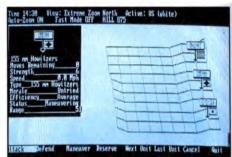
You can create air units — tactical or strategic — by creating "wildcard" units and defining their range as "51 grid points" (which means the entire map). Then you can call air strikes down on any enemy unit you can see.



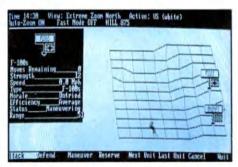
On the battle logic screen, you select the degree of computer involvement. Choosing generic commands ("left flank attack" and so on) lets you nudge the computer in a general direction.



Because the Vietnam scenarios are on a less massive scale than the other *UMS* battles, the "extreme zoom" mode gives you an intimate, almost squad-by-squad view of the action.

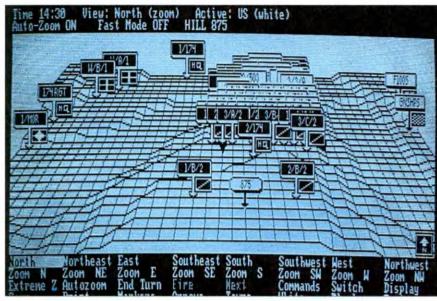


Modern artillery is introduced into the *UMS* program via the Vietnam scenarios. Most of the time, you'll have to scroll the screen in order to call down a fire mission, due to the long ranges involved.

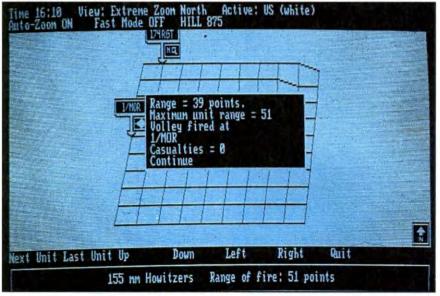


You can also call in air strikes, anywhere on the map. You may be disappointed in their effectiveness, however, when the enemy is under cover.

In all *UMS* scenarios, you issue commands and allocate fire support, and then hope for the best. Once a combat or movement phase has begun, you cannot interrupt the computer's control. Just as in real life, a commander can only do so much to influence the events on the battlefield. Both new scenarios come with detailed historical handbooks. Reading them will help you get more from the games, as well as provide some sound tactical advice.



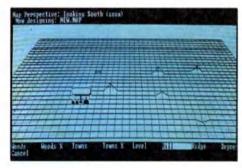
The battle of Hill 875 pits U.S. fire power against North Vietnamese zeal and infiltration skills. The Americans *can* be overrun. Play both sides and get new insight into the tactics of the Vietnam War.



Infantry clashes are at such close range in some of the Vietnam scenarios that you'll have to pick and choose your targets for fire support very carefully.



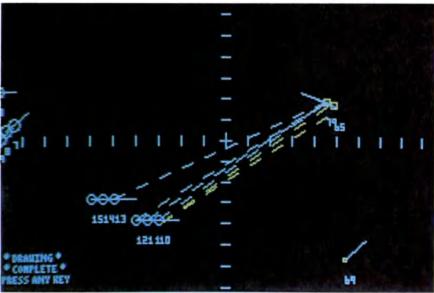
When you've exhausted the programmed scenarios, *UMS* lets you create and save new ones. Customize a real battle or create one from scratch.



Use the powerful map generating program to create customized terrain. Maps can be printed, too, if desired.

Hardware requirements: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 512K minimum memory; EGA or CGA graphics.

ACTION STATIONS!



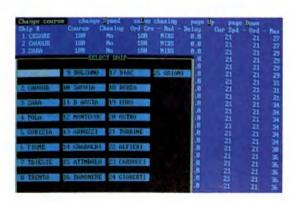
EGA screens shown

The battle is plotted on a screen similar to those found in the Combat Information Centers of real warships.

All engagements begin on the action menu, where you are given the name of the battle, the time, and any relevant environmental conditions.



You can change the course and speed of each ship individually, or you can maneuver the entire formation at once.



his game was designed by a professional naval officer as part of a project designed to use artificial intelligence to simulate the dynamics of tactical decision-making. The program's author, Alan D. Zimm, says, "it was evident ... that a very fine-grain, detailed simulation was required. More than in land combat, battles at sea can be greatly influenced by the smallest details. To simulate the command process, a comprehensive model was developed to encompass the myriad factors which influence sea battles."

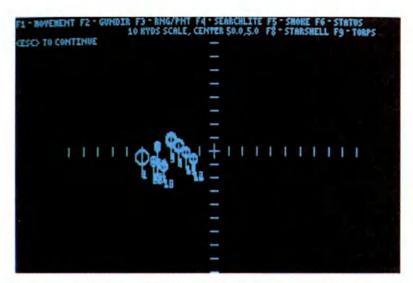
That sums it up. Commander Zimm has crunched a tremendous amount of data (including such subtle factors as gun crew fatigue), covering all the warships of every major power from 1922 to 1945, organized it into an elegant game system, and clothed it in clean, no-nonsense graphics. Engagements are fought on a battle plot screen, using the format and symbols found in Combat Information Centers aboard actual warships.

Zimm has programmed most of the major naval engagements of World War II and has thoughtfully included an optional program for customizing your own battles. Fascinatingly, this allows you to deploy and command advanced ship designs which never got off the drawing board, including the awesome German H-44 class, which was supposedly designed to carry 20-inch guns!

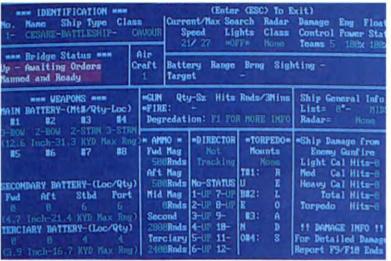
Players looking for whistles and bells and lots of animation will probably find this game too puritanical, but players who seek true authenticity will treasure it as a masterpiece.

Conflict Analytics

Hardware requirements: IBM and compatibles; 640K minimum memory; EGA, CGA, or Hercules graphics; mouse optional.



You can adjust the scale of the battle plot to show entire fleets or individual formations.



The status screen tells you the condition of each ship in detail, including the number of shells left in the magazines and any significant damage sustained.

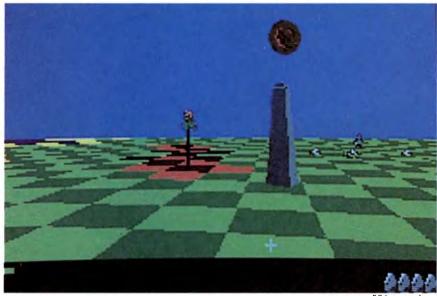


The controls menu allows you to launch torpedo attacks, catapult spotter planes, lay smoke, illuminate, or counterflood to control a list.



In one-on-one engagements between single ships, consult the armor penetration tables in the manual, then call up the range/penetration menu for that specific battle. By comparing a few numbers, you may find some range parameters within which your shells will penetrate his armor while his shells will only cause superficial damage to your superstructure. If so, try to find and maintain this range, no matter what sort of fancy maneuvering you must make.

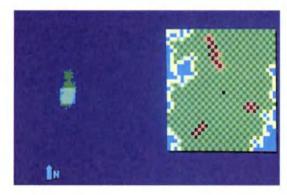
ARCHIPELAGOS



EGA screens show

Navigation is crucial to success. Remember that the reddish-brown satellite planet is always in the north sky.

The map screens show your location and that of poisoned land, but *not* where the obelisk and its stones are located.



Don't linger near these sinister plants — their infection spreads rapidly and is fatal to the touch.



magine a race of people so wise that they could conjure landscapes at will — a race of ancients for whom the creation of islands was both an art form and an obsession.

Now imagine that race conquered by evil invaders, and their myriad islands infected with evil and haunted by the spirits of the ancients themselves. Now imagine that you are chosen to reclaim this vast archipelago from that evil. That's the premise of *Archipelagos*, a weird, addictive, and eerily beautiful game from Logotron, an English software company noted for innovative concepts.

Each island is dominated by a central obelisk which draws power from a number of satellite stones scattered about. You must destroy the satellite stones in order to weaken the obelisk long enough to destroy it. (If you don't get it in 90 seconds, the obelisk gets you!) But there has to be a land connection — however devious and roundabout—between the obelisk and the stones.

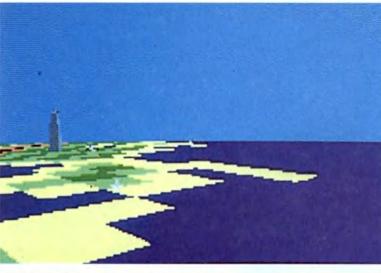
Each dynamic island of clear, green land is gradually infected by ambulatory poisonous trees and other evil forces. Each island is different — some are realistic, some symbolic, some just whimsical. Each is also a challenging, self-contained puzzle, as you race to reclaim them from evil with a combination of speed, strategy, and timing. Some islands can be solved in minutes, but some take hours. And with 9,999 landscapes programmed into *Archipelagos*, you certainly get plenty of game for the money.

Logotron

Hardware requirements: IBM PC, Tandy, and compatibles; 512K minimum memory; EGA or CGA graphics; mouse recommended.



You'll often have to create lots of squares of land to reach the stones. Make sure they're connected to the obelisk.



Some archipelagos require you to build long or convoluted causeways. Don't even try building until you've collected dozens of energy spores.



The deadly Necromancers first bubble up from the sand in Archipelago 13. They are easily avoided, but quite obnoxious, since they change good land back into bad when your back is turned.



Objects appearing on the islands' horizons may flicker for a few seconds before you get close enough for them to become solid and detailed. Therefore, as you drift over the landscape, keep scanning the horizon for a gray flicker. If you spot one, alter course and head for it. It will be an energy-spore plant, one of the satellite stones, or the obelisk itself.

CHESSMASTER 2100



EGA screens show

The three-dimensional board option is excellent and can be brought up at any time, but you may find that the standard 2-D board gives you cleaner lines of sight.

Don't worry about learning the remarkable array of options in *Chessmaster 2100*. Helpscreens like this are plentiful and easy to use.



Try studying the chess board from different perspectives. And, if you're playing black, switch the board so that white appears at the top.



here are few pleasures greater
— or more surprising — than
discovering a good thing made
better. That's certainly the case with
Chessmaster 2100 from Software
Toolworks. The original Chessmaster
2000 won high marks for its rich variety
of features; strong multi-level chess
competition program; and attractive,
easy-to-use format.

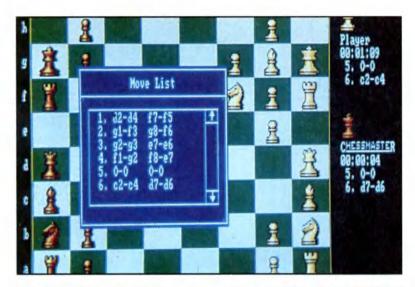
The new program goes even further, using advanced chess logic from Fidelity Electronics (a leader in electronic chess) and adding an even more integrated and flexible collection of user options. Virtually everything can be changed in the program except, of course, the rules of chess.

All of the standard features of computer chess are here. But it's the extras that make the game stand out for beginners and experienced players alike: an opening "book" library of 150,000 positions; plenty of classic games to replay; a menu-driven user interface that's easy to use; hint and help screens; flexible settings for advanced play and timed play; analysis of positions; and teaching mode with commentary and opening move practice.

Chessmaster 2100 will even rate your play according to the U.S. Chess Federation point system. The game features just go on and on. In short, it's difficult to think of any aspect of the game chess that's not included in this excellent new game.

Software Toolworks

Hardware requirements: IBM and compatibles; 512K minimum memory; VGA, EGA, MCGA, CGA, Tandy 16-color, or Hercules graphics; mouse or joystick optional.



Pop-up windows such as this "move list" option let you review the action. You can even take back moves by changing the list during the game.



The "war room" view is one that you'll use much of the time. It shows the move list, clocks, captured pieces, 2-D board, and the computer's calculations.



One of the best ways to improve your game is to ask the computer for a "thoughtful hint." You can even limit the computer's "thinking" time for hints.



In addition to a wide array of standard and special features, *Chessmaster 2100* also offers such arcane options as creating your own chess set using Electronic Arts' *Deluxe Paint II*, playing blindfold chess against the computer, and practicing your book openings with commentary from the computer.

ECHELON



EGA screens shown

Fly the C-104 like a jet or a helicopter — up, down, or even backwards. For a graphics treat, take the C-104 up to maximum altitude, then put it into a power-dive, stopping five meters from the surface.

When you're ready to add more action, switch to the combat mode and start dogfighting with space pirates.



As soon as you find artifacts from the mysterious ancient civilization of Isis, teleport them aboard for examination.



chelon is the code name for a hush-hush military base on Isis, a vast and mysterious planet discovered beyond the orbit of Pluto. Although the government suspects that Isis may hold the secrets of a long-dead civilization, both scientific research and ordinary commerce have been seriously interrupted by attacks from space pirates. Their hidden base is thought to be on or near Isis.

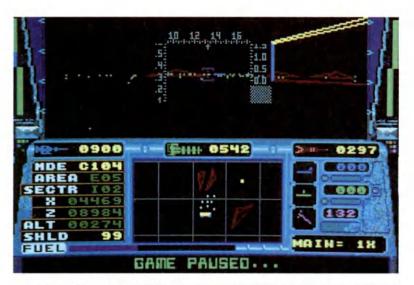
Your assignment involves making a survey of Isis, completing a map of its surface, and amassing data on the vanished inhabitants. You must also pick up any clues about the pirates.

You're behind the wheel of a C-104 Tomahawk cruiser, but mastering its controls isn't as hard as with some flight simulators. Exploration can be a big, extended joyride. Clues materialize at a leisurely pace, and there is much to savor in the graphics and the impressive "RealSound" audio effects.

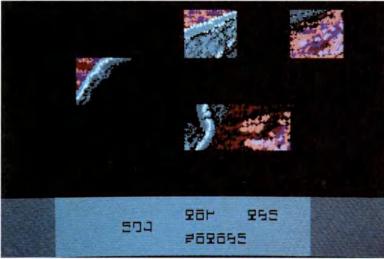
When you're ready for it, add combat to the game — a little or a lot, depending on your mood. Using your remote control drone, you can actually explore the inside of exotic alien structures, as well as hazardous terrain features. The blank map of Isis will gradually fill with information. Now the game becomes more of a quest. And most players won't want to stop until that map is complete, even though Echelon isn't a game you can expect to finish in an evening.

Access Software

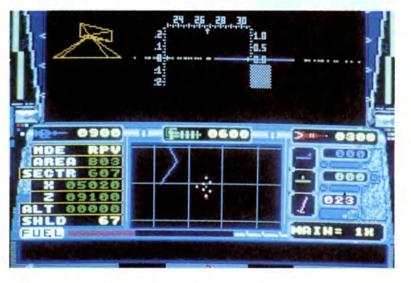
Hardware requirements: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 384K minimum memory; VGA, EGA, CGA, or Hercules graphics; joystick and keyboard optional; hard disc installation recommended.



The C-104 maneuvers just as easily when you use the keyboard as when you try a joystick.



By analyzing teleported artifacts, you can unlock the secrets of the space pirates' maps.

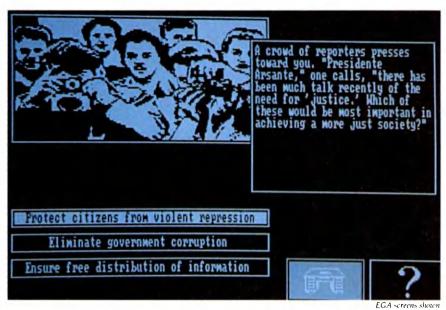


Use the RPV (remote piloted vehicle) to explore structures and other tight or hazardous places.



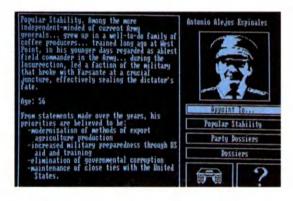
Most players should probably play their first few hours of *Echelon* in the "scientific" mode. This option allows you to explore and gather data undisturbed by hostile intruders. Once you've become adept at controlling the C-104, however, you'll probably want to spice things up with a bit of combat. You can change modes any time by accessing the data link. In the "patrol" mode, you will be attacked, but only once in awhile. If you go into the "military" mode, you'll have all the action you can handle.

HIDDEN AGENDA



Select your administration's long-term goals and philosophy carefully at the start of each game — you and your country will be affected by these choices.

Antonio Alejos Espinales of the Popular Stability Party might be a good choice for a law-and-order administration. But will he support your land-reform efforts?



Your office is the center of all meetings and decisions. You choose your encounters, contacts, consultations, and reports from here.



hink you can do a better job of running a Central American nation — or any nation — than the powers that be? Hidden Agenda gives you the chance to try your hand at bringing stability, peace, prosperity, and freedom to the troubled land of Chimerica. And it does this in a way that is as captivating as it is educational. More than almost any other computer game we've seen, Hidden Agenda succeeds at being both fun and valuable as a learning tool.

As the new presidente of Chimerica, you must try to pull together a nation recently ripped apart by a coup against a corrupt dictatorial regime. You have to put Chimerica back on its feet while balancing the demands of competing factions that range from right-wing business and military elements to Marxist revolutionaries.

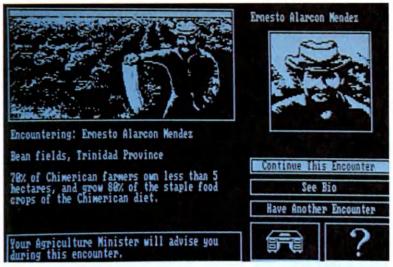
The rural poor want a redistribution of land. The urban masses want to stop the spiraling price increases brought on by unchecked inflation. Part of the military wants a return to strong national stability (death squads, possibly?), and another part wants to complete the revolution it considers unfinished. The demands never stop.

You will receive advice and requests from broad segments of the population, foreign representatives, and from your own hand-picked government ministers of defense, agriculture, internal affairs, and external affairs.

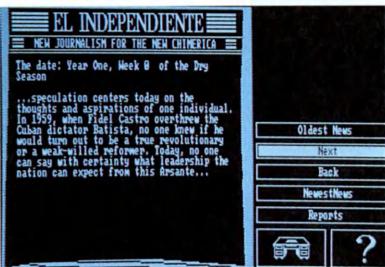
Remember, you can't please everyone. So be careful whom you anger, or you'll find yourself at the wrong end of a *coup d'etat*.

Springboard

Hardware requirements: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 512K minimum memory; EGA, MCGA, CGA, Tandy 16-color, or Hercules graphics.



If you meet with this campesino, he will ask for help for the rural poor. Is that a part of your agenda, or will you disappoint the people he represents?



El Independiente is one of several newspapers in Chimerica that will report on your decisions. Each represents a different political view

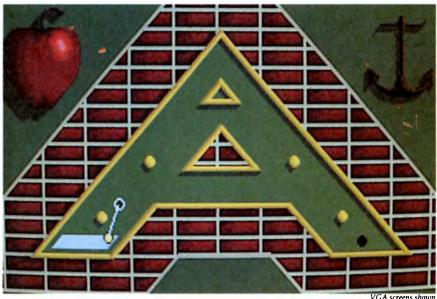


The advice you receive from your ministers can steer you toward success or ultimately bring your government to its knees. Choose carefully.



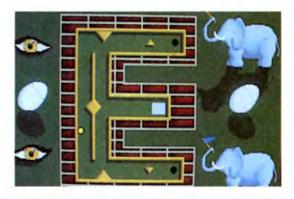
The human element is one important aspect of game play that contributes to the success of *Hidden Agenda*. You interact with many different people, all of whom have their own agendas — some of them hidden. You must learn to balance your goals with those of your ministers, the people, and foreign governments.

HOLE-IN-ONE MINIATURE GOLF: EXTRA COURSE DISKS



The first hole on the Alphabet course depicts the letter A. Notice how important it becomes to think about angles before you start. The most obvious shot is rarely the correct one.

Hole 5, naturally, is the letter E. The letter's complex design creates an equally complex hole.



Yes, on the Easter hole from the Holidays course, the bunnies are hopelessly cute, but rest assured they'll get in your way. So will the eggs and chocolates scattered on the ground.



igitek quickly followed its release of Hole-in-One Miniature Golf with a collection of three new courses. All share the graphic excellence, as well as the range of difficulty, of the game's original courses.

On the Alphabet course, each hole is shaped like a letter. Only the first 18 letters of the alphabet are represented, naturally, but each of these has its own challenges. The curving "C" hole, for example, plays much differently than the angular "K" hole, and you'll find yourself struggling to figure out how to conquer the other shapes as well.

Holidays follows the 3-D graphics example of the Menagerie course in the original game. This time, you play through a series of drawings representing holidays ranging from Easter to Halloween to Christmas. The cartoon-like illustrations are both clever and attractive, and, as before, simply finding the hole is sometimes your hardest task.

Far-Out is, by far, the most difficult of the three courses. Although many of the holes look quite easy, most of them violate the laws of physics. The path from the starting pad to the hole may look like a straight line, but it inevitably turns into a series of hills, valleys, and magnetic forces.

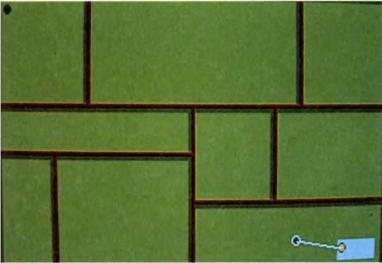
Graphically, Alphabet and Holidays will be a special treat for younger players, but make sure you're on hand to help them out. As for Far-Out — well, you're completely on your own. Don't be surprised if each hole takes 10-15 strokes the first time through.

Digitek

Hardware requirements: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 256K minimum memory (384K for VGA); VGA, EGA, MCGA, CGA, Tandy 16-color, or Hercules graphics; joystick and mouse optional.



On one of four Christmas holes in *Holidays*, Santa and the elves are working on toys. You'll soon wish they were neater, since all those tools and parts must be avoided if you're going to reach the hole.



There are no apparent breaks in the walls in *Far-Out* hole 6. Your task is to find out where (and how hard) to hit the ball to launch it into an adjacent section.

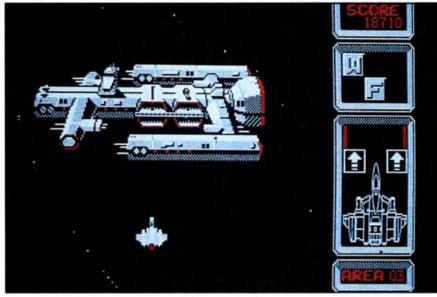


On Far-Out hole 13, you must discover which of several holes is the right one. The fact that half the objects are upside-down doesn't help much.



Pressing H brings up the help menu, and from here you can see how to replay a shot. On the *Far-Out* course, you'll want to use this feature extensively — and because of the difficulty of these holes, it's not a bad idea. But don't revert to replaying on *Alphabet* or *Holidays*; it spoils some of the fun. This is fantasy mini-golf, after all, not a test of how well you can putt a real golf ball.

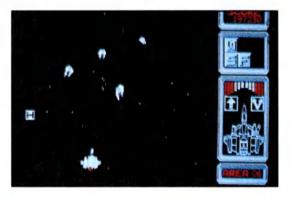
SILPHEED



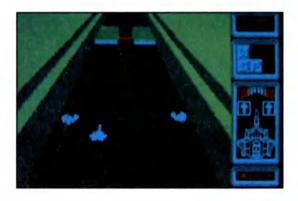
EGA screens shown

At the end of each level, your ship will automatically stop at a tender for repair and weapon selection. For every 50,000 points earned, an additional weapon will become available for use.

Your weaponry and strength can be reinforced by obtaining items that can be found inside golans. Obtaining an "H," for example, will provide you with additional shielding.



Avoid slamming against the walls of the fortresses while eliminating or evading oncoming attackers. Smack into a wall or partition, and the game is over. Avoiding walls, however, gets harder as you advance.



ilpheed has come roaring across the Pacific and into your PC with 20 levels of warp speed action and more than 30 alien adversaries. Sierra's superb graphics have been added to the original Japanese version of the game, which is already a blockbuster hit in the land of the rising sun.

The year is 3032. The mission is to maneuver your Super Air Fighter SA-08 inside Xacalite's battleship and destroy the outlaw leader. To succeed, you will have to destroy hundreds of attackers while navigating through 20 cosmic battlefields.

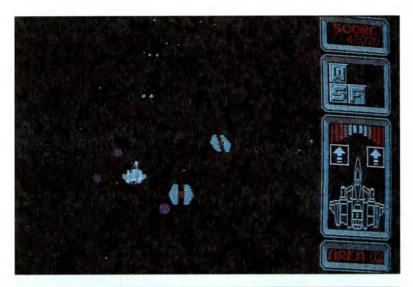
Whenever you can, grab the powerup items found inside the *golans*, which resemble asteroids. Destroying the larger enemy cruisers will earn bonus points. For example, exterminating a Robayon destroyer will give you 50,000 bonus points.

Often it is best to accelerate forward to meet the onrushing enemies head on. This is especially effective against the Feizel attackers. By taking the offensive, you can destroy them before they have a chance to launch their missiles.

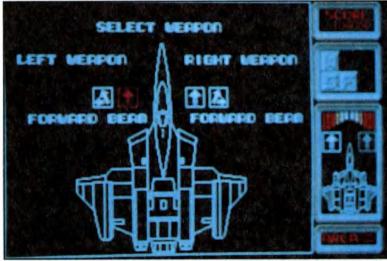
To avoid death by *gonosu* (rectangle-shaped guided satellites), center your ship on the screen. As they begin to converge on your location, shoot upwards and circle back around as the screen clears.

Sierra On-Line

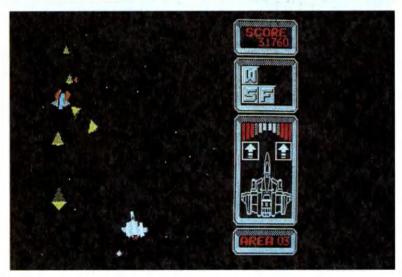
Hardware requirements: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 512K minimum memory; VGA, EGA, MCGA, CGA, and Tandy 16-color graphics; supports Roland MT-32, Ad Lib, and IBM music cards; joystick recommended.



Blast a golan with an "A" inside and a ring of asteroids will surround your spacecraft to form a protective shield.



Which weapon you should choose depends on the kinds of attackers you will have to defend against. For example, while the laser cannon is more powerful than the forward beam, it is not as accurate.

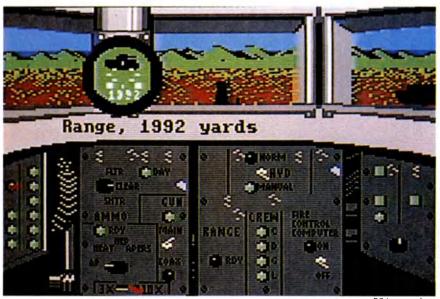


Some enemy cruisers use satellites, which serve as a buffer for the warship's defense. They can also do damage to your craft if you collide with them.



Collect as many power-up items as you can, particularly in the early going. It is almost impossible to survive beyond level 3 without boosting your weaponry. Also concentrate on racking up bonus points. You will need to acquire the laser cannon to successfully navigate through the fortresses, and the V-beam is necessary to progress beyond level 3.

STEEL THUNDER



EGA screens sho

Always measure a target's range before firing — the probability of scoring a hit increases significantly, especially at long ranges.

The Bradley fighting vehicle has limited tank-killing capability (you have to come to a stop in order to fire its TOW missiles), but it moves like a demon.



Your mission orders specify a best-choice vehicle and ammo mix, but you can try something else if you like.



teel Thunder provides one of the most realistic simulations of armored combat on the market, enhanced by vivid, cinematic graphics and satisfying sound effects.

The program contains 24 mission scenarios in three theaters of war: Cuba, Syria, and West Germany. You get to control all four front-line U.S. armored vehicles of the 1980s — the M-60, the upgraded and still potent M48 Patton, the controversial M3 Bradley, and the state-of-the-art M1A1 Abrams. Although your mission orders specify one type of vehicle as the most suitable, there's nothing to prevent you from using another if you want. There's lots of variety with 96 mix-and-match missions possible.

The terrain and movement are quite realistic, and the enemy vehicles maneuver so convincingly you'd swear they were controlled by flesh-and-blood soldiers. *Good* ones, too — some scenarios are suicidal unless you take full advantage of hills, trees, speed, maneuverability, and all of your vehicle's high-tech sighting and concealment systems.

If, for example, a Russian Sagger missile starts arcing toward you, put out a smoke screen *immediately*, throw the tank into reverse, and then use your thermal sights to "see" through the smoke and locate the tank that's firing at you. Your superior gun range permits you to go hull-down at great distances and pick off units of a superior enemy force until the odds are more in your favor.

Accolade

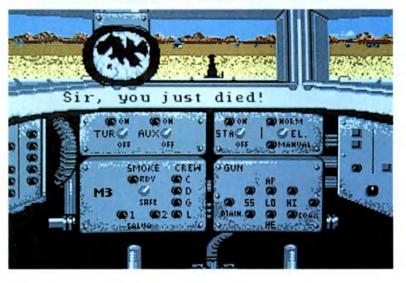
Hardware requirements: IBM PC, Tandy and compatibles; 384K minimum memory; VGA, EGA, MCGA, CGA or Hercules graphics; joystick optional.



You can customize your ammo mix at the start of each mission. If you're after bunkers, for instance, you won't need armor-piercing rounds. But a wise tank commander packs a few, just in case.



When the odds get too heavy, you can always lay smoke, back into it, and pick off a few enemy units with your thermal sights.

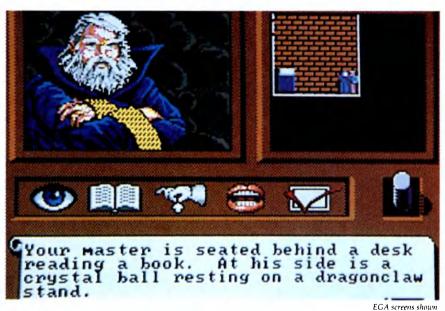


The missions get hairier when you transfer to the Syrian front. If you don't use all your tactical savvy, you get "brewed up" before you know what hit you.



Tanks can carry only a limited supply of heavy ammo. No matter which vehicle you're controlling, you'll almost never have enough armor-piercing or HEAT rounds to blast every possible target. Save your big gun for the most powerful and heavily armored targets. Remember that your old reliable .50 caliber machine gun can pierce armor, too. It fires 600 rounds per minute and can chew apart those pesky BTR-70s at ranges in excess of 2,000 yards (not to mention what it will do to thin-skinned trucks and enemy infantry).

TANGLED TALES



Eldritch, your mentor, will assign your missions. He'll also have someone revive you if you die in pursuit of a quest.

Here's your first stop as you leave Fairhaven. But before you venture down the vine, make sure you've learned the light spell.



If you help Alvin escape from the goblins, he'll join your party. Most goblins are easy to defeat and often carry gold. But run away from the ghouls.



ave you ever wondered what your friends found intriguing about fantasy role-playing games? They spend an hour reading the instruction manual, a half hour developing a character or party of characters, and practically a year building the experience they need to finish whatever quest is the goal of the game. Where's the fun?

Well, here's a game for those novices who can't get into marathon games. Tangled Tales is role-playing for beginners. There's no real character to build, no wisdom or strength points to distribute, no mapping, and no enormous world to explore. And — get this — every time you die you can be rejuvenated. Every time!

You begin *Tangled Tales* as a wizard's apprentice. After a certain misfortune (the dreaded squirrel incident), your mentor has erased all the spells from your spell book. You have to complete three wacky adventures before you can return to his good graces.

Your party builds as you meet other characters. There's Riley, whom you rouse from a sound slumber in the hotel; Alvin, the elf you save from a goblin attack; Goldilocks, the wellendowed hostage of three bears; Billy the Kid, whom you meet near the troll bridge; and ... well, you get the picture.

As you complete your missions, report to Eldritch. He'll offer you upgrades of charisma, intelligence, athletic ability, or speed. Maybe after all three goals are achieved, he'll reconsider your apprentice status. You might become a wizard after all.

Origin

Hardware requirements: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 384K minimum memory; EGA, CGA, Tandy 16-color, or Hercules graphics.



This is no ordinary bunny. Free Idunn from her cage and an amazing transformation will take place. Take the apple seeds she'll give you and plant them in the garden.



You can find something in Moe's Magic Shop in which Drek will be interested. Once Drek has left his chambers, you'll be able to search for a valuable spell.



Ogres rarely carry any money, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't fight them. That's Goldilocks' cabin behind your party. If you could lure the bears out, you might be able to sneak inside. Now let's see ... what do bears like best?



The hints we've given you have all been for the first adventure. When you've completed Eldritch's vial (thus completing your first mission), the wizard will offer you an increase in one of your abilities. Increase your charisma rating so you can talk to Eldritch and get your second mission right away. Then it's off to Violet Valley!

TONGUE OF THE FATMAN



Rubic uses a special move, the expando kick, to his advantage.

Doctor Kadavar designs and builds his own weapons, then passes the savings on to you.



Freezer chalks up his first Fight Palace victory.



ross a sci-fi comic book with the World Wrestling Federation, and you might come up with this humorous hybrid. The concept is a corker: intergalactic wrestling with no holds barred.

Journey to the 26th century. At Mondu's Fight Palace, the proprietor is more than pleasantly plump — he's a sumo wrestler who'll assault you verbally if he can't get you into the ring. You're a grappler at the bottom of the tournament ladder. You've got a thousand bucks with which to gamble, buy funky weapons, or pay for rejuvenation after defeat. Win your bouts and climb the ranks until you reach your final match against Mondu, his enormous girth, and his deadly tongue.

Before each match, you're invited to shop for bio-weapons at Doctor Kadaver's "Boutique of Bloodlust." Then you'll have the chance to place a wager on the outcome of the bout. Each match carries a substantial purse, so it's not necessary to gamble to make money at Mondu's — as long as you win.

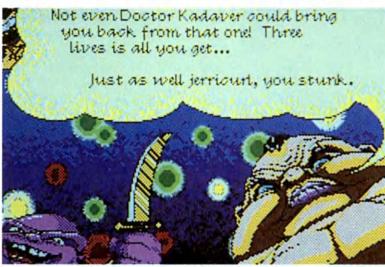
Your battle repertoire includes 15 kicks, punches, flips, and other fighting moves. Use as wide a variety as possible in a match, since your opponent develops an immunity to any technique that's repeated excessively. And there's no opportunity to pause and rethink your strategy. So you've got two choices: You can memorize how to make the different moves, or you can try to grab a glance at the movement chart between blows. With a little luck, you'll end up facing Mondu. On the other hand, you might get your clock cleaned.

Activision

Hardware requirements: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 512K minimum memory; VGA, EGA, MCGA, CGA, or Tardy 16-color graphics; joystick optional; supports music cards.



Obviously, Freezer forgot that sleeping in the Fight Pit is strictly prohibited.



Mondu can't pass up a chance to stop by and offer his best wishes to one less fortunate than he.

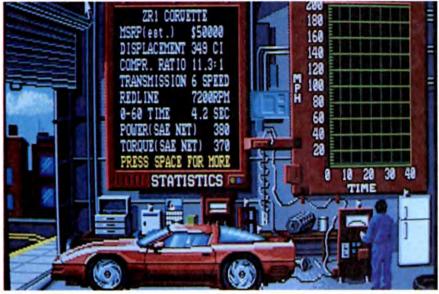


Another bout, more competitors, and perhaps a new champion who can de-tongue the Fatman



You'll soon discover that the good doctor has his weapons arranged by price range. Without a doubt, the grease slime (at \$495) is a useful item. When used properly (i.e., thrown at your enemy's feet), it's better than a banana peel at tripping up your foe. The electro-touch (\$999) is also effective. It charges your punches like a cattle prod. Budget shoppers might prefer the zan zan needles. You can get under your opponent's skin for a reasonable \$299.

VETTE!



EGA screens shown

In the garage, you select the 'vette you'll drive. Stats are given for each of the four types. Here we select the ZR1.

The on-screen map of San Francisco runs from the San Francisco Zoo (bottom left) to the Golden Gate Bridge (upper middle) to the Bay Bridge (upper right).



There's nothing like hurtling down the Great Highway at 99 mph, even with a semitrailer in the windshield ahead and to the left.



n Vette!, you drive a Corvette. Not just any Corvette, you understand. You have your choice of four of the best: the 1989 stock model, the 1989 ZR1 King of the Hill, the 1989 Callaway Twin Turbo, and the 1989 Callaway Sledgehammer. Your goal is simple: beat one of four other sports cars to the finish line. Your competition includes the Lamborghini Countach, the Porsche 928S 4, the Ferrari Testarossa, and the Ferrari F40.

The graphics in *Vette!* are extremely impressive. The setting is the city of San Francisco, and you may drive around it at will. Furthermore, you can race against a computer-driven car, or, by connecting through a modem (or null-modem cable), against a human opponent. The program accepts joystick, mouse, or keyboard input.

A map of San Francisco is provided with the game, and on the back the city's numerous points of interest are listed. If you're not interested in winning a race, simply drive where you wish. But even participating in the four races will show you the sites. The most extensive race takes you from the San Francisco Zoo to Vista Point and across the Golden Gate Bridge. You have to avoid traffic along the Great Highway by the Pacific Ocean, then wheel onto the freeway. Whew!

The different driving views add variety as well as assisting your driving. You can look through the front windshield, get a side view, or even see using a bird's-eye view from a helicopter

Spectrum Holobyte

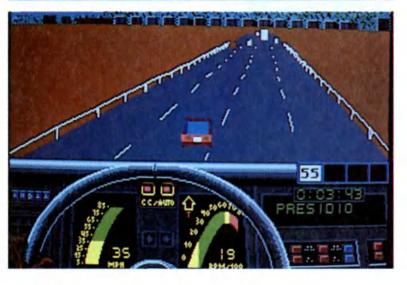
Hardware requirements: IBM and compatibles; 640K minimum memory (512K for CGA); EGA or CGA graphics; joystick and mouse optional.



Here's an aerial of "the Great" using the helicopter view. Often this is an easier driving mode — especially when changing lanes.



Using the excellent side view, check out one of the windmills in Golden Gate Park. The side views are extremely welcome because of their realism.



This view, which combines the helicopter view and the dashboard view, shows the Golden Gate Bridge ahead and to the left.



Freeway driving is nerve-racking, but one of the game's features helps you. If you hold the K or 5 key (or the right mouse button), you'll remain centered in your lane. Use it often; it helps immensely. Also, you can shift gears yourself, or have the computer do it for you when your mind's on something else.

WHERE IN TIME IS CARMEN SANDIEGO?



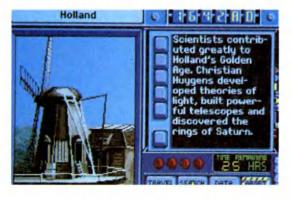
VGA screens shown

Your visit to the America of the 1600s has provided a crucial clue in your investigation. Now that you know Tasman's nationality and the time of his sailing, set your skimmer for Holland.

Even though you've been assured that time travel is no big deal these days, somehow the sight of that liability form has you backing towards the door.



If your investigation weren't so critical, you could spend some time in the places you're visiting. Holland in the 17th century, for example, seems to be a place of great progress, yet a symbol of the simpler times of the past.



ou just can't keep a good thief down. Or so it would seem with Carmen Sandiego. That master thief is on the loose again with a new band of henchmen. And she has a new heinous plan. Not content with plundering the museums and landmarks of the present, she has managed to make off with a time machine. Now all of history is ripe for plucking by Carmen and her cohorts.

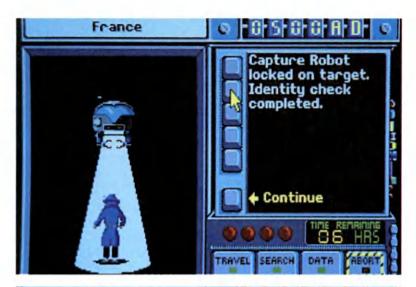
Anyone familiar with the Carmen Sandiego series (her adventures are chronicled in Where in Europe, Where in the U.S.A., and Where in the World) won't find too many surprises in Where in Time Is Carmen Sandiego?. The play is similar, although this time you have a wondrous chronoskimmer — replete with a myriad of investigation devices — to aid you in your searches. The chronoskimmer can take you just about anywhere in the world from A.D. 400 to the present.

Each case in the game, whether Carmen has stolen the original Magna Carta, Don Quixote's lance, Paul Revere's horse, or the manuscript of Huckleberry Finn, follows the same basic pattern. The fun is not in the action, but in piecing together the little bits of info you collect from witnesses, informants, and your scanner. If you can't collate the evidence, issue a warrant, and track down your prey within a certain time limit, your future as a time detective is highly questionable.

Where in Time Is Carmen Sandiego? is not only fun for the entire family, but a good alternative to rote learning from a textbook. Its excellent graphics and a sense of humor help take the tedium out of learning history.

Broderbund

IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 640K minimum memory for VGA or MCGA graphics, 512K for EGA, CGA, Tandy 16-Color, or Hercules graphics; mouse or joystick optional.



Your trusty capture robot has your quarry in its beam. Escape is impossible, and once identity verification has been accomplished, this character can be put away. Now if only you could track down the wily Carmen.



You can see the splendor of history with the chronoskimmer — not only the big events, but also the incidentals. You'll develop a connection with the past when you find history staring you in the face.



Your travel menu can be a big help when you find yourself stuck with a lot of clues but no definite path to pursue. Sometimes seeing the name of a location and time will jog your memory and reveal a common thread with which to tie together all your loose ends.



Don't go into the data computer until you have at least two solid clues concerning the identity of your quarry. Usually, you won't get a positive ID with less than three clues, and you'll be using up your time allotment by accessing the data banks prematurely. And use your scanner only as a last option, since the objects it finds can sometimes give misleading clues. The informants are your best bet, as they usually give more precise reports.

WINDWALKER



EGA screens shown

You first received your summons from Moebius in this ancient temple. What lies ahead for you, no one can tell. At least, Moebius isn't saying what he has planned for you.

Through the many years, you have heard of the wisdom of the great Moebius. In your wildest dreams, you never thought you would be called to carry on his work.



Martial training is of great importance. You must learn to fight well so that you will gain the confidence not to fight, and thereby seek a more enlightened and peaceful solution to a problem.



he mysterious Moebius, known as the Windwalker, master of a thousand ancient arts, has called for you. You must join him. Though you have honored your village by being chosen, becoming Moebius' pupil will bring you even more fame.

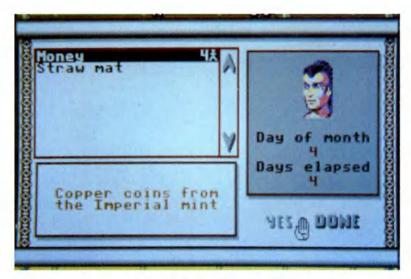
After being recruited, you go into training and learn the martial arts of the Ancients. When you have finished your education, you will be versed in both unarmed and armed combat, skills that are necessary for your quest. That quest is to go out into the countryside and work to bring peace and enlightenment to all people.

Because you must educate and enlighten, part of your schooling is devoted to divining the ultimate truths of both the *I Ching* (the *Book of Changes*), and *The Mystic Runes of Windwalker*, written by Moebius himself. Your journey continues to add to your enlightenment by adding ever more to your wealth of knowledge.

In your travels you learn of the terror on the land wrought by the warlord, Zhurong, and his evil ally, Shen Jang, the alchemist. Perhaps it is your destiny to free the land of Khantun, and restore the Emperor to his rightful place. Was this why the wise Moebius chose you in the first place?

Origin

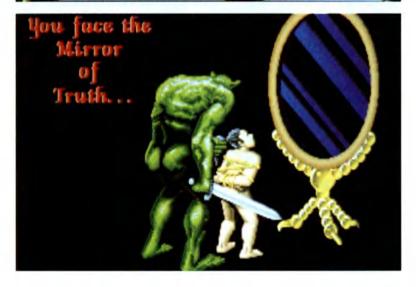
Hardware requirements: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 384K minimum memory; VGA, EGA, MCGA, CGA, Tandy 16-color, or Hercules graphics; mouse recommended.



When your quest begins, you have but a few meager possessions. It is up to you to provide for your needs along the journey. Often, you may find villagers more than happy to aid a disciple of Moebius.



True wisdom is gained by assimilating many views. The local village tavern is a great place to pick up useful information — and maybe even a free drink and a couple of coins.



The penalty for abandoning your quest is almost too terrible to imagine. Once the Warlord's men catch you, even the intervention of Moebius won't help you.



Keep close track of your strength. When you are told that you are sleepy or hungry, take heed. You'll lose energy quickly should a thief happen to show up, asking for what little you own. Your weakness might even prove fatal. Fights should always be avoided late in the day, since you are already fatigued and not much of a challenge for even the puniest of thieves.

FEATURE STORY



NEIL RANDALL

The Western world has seen many empires, but none as sweeping or as fascinating as that of ancient Rome. It's true that Britain's empire spanned more continents and hemispheres, and Hitler's empire occupied more territory, but Rome's lasted much longer than Hitler's and was much more unified than Victoria's. For half a millennium, Rome was Europe. In fact, Latin remained the official language of the West long after the empire collapsed.

Rome was no kind or

gentle nation, of course. With its slaves, torturers, and insane rulers, Rome was infamous for corruption and immorality. But its art, architecture, games, and military systems were all so enormously influential that today we look at Rome primarily from those perspectives.

Politics, games, and military systems provide the focus for **Electronic Arts'** new *Centurion* game. An easy-to-play but strongly detailed look at the rise (and possibly the fall) of Rome, *Centurion* begins in the

year 275 B.C. and continues until either Rome is conquered or you become Caesar.

Your goal is simple: You wish to rise from the lowly rank of officer to the ultimate rank of Caesar. In the process, of course, you must help the empire as well. Only by benefiting the empire can you rise in rank, and only by bringing all of Europe under your control can you attain the position of Caesar. Even then, your task is not complete.

You'll work your way up

through nine ranks: officer, centurion, tribune, legatus, general, praetor, consul, proconsul, and Caesar. At the lowest rank, you can control one legion (i.e., army) and no fleets. Two ranks later, as tribune, you can control three legions (which now can include cavalry) and one fleet. By the time you become general, you can have six legions and two fleets at your command; at the rank of consul you are capable of operating three fleets and ten legions, with the legions



now as proficient as extremely powerful consular armies.

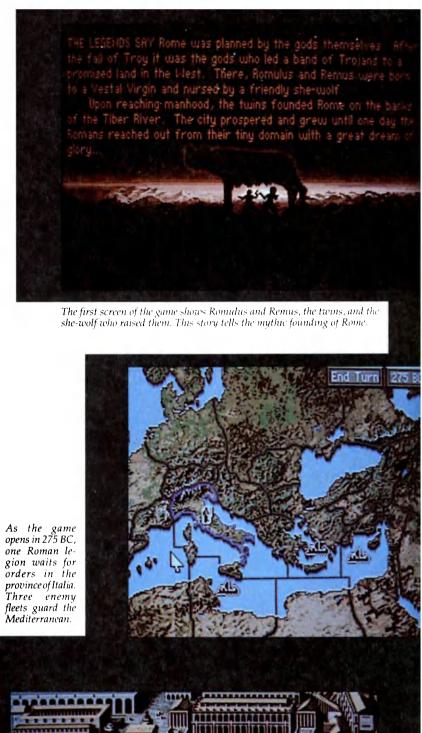
Your rise in rank depends on your accomplishments in a number of areas — and many options are open to you from the beginning of the game. You can conquer territory by moving legions into non-Roman provinces and defeating their armies in battle or convincing them to surrender or swear allegiance to you. You can strengthen existing treaties by altering taxes and entertaining the natives. You can build an amphitheater in Rome. You can hold games and gladiatorial events in Rome and in the other territories.

In short, your success depends on your efforts in the battlefield, your diplomacy, your efficiency as an administrator, and — this is a vital part of the game — the way the populace perceives your actions as the upholder of Rome's honor.

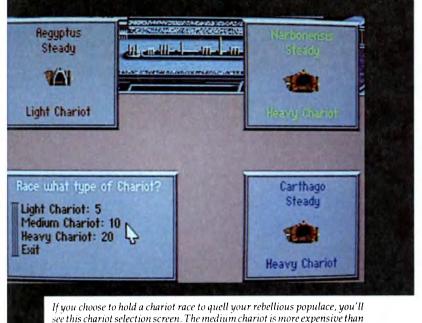
Your social status is automatically lowered if you fail at a chariot race or gladiatorial event, let an alliance weaken, don't protect an ally from foreign attack, or lose a battle. You won't ever be demoted, but your well-planned route to becoming Caesar will certainly be slowed. And, at the advanced levels of the game, catching up again can be extremely time-consuming.

Four difficulty levels are available, ranging from "galley slave" through "emperor". If you wish—and this is a very nice touch—you can adjust the difficulty levels of different parts of the game individually. For instance, you can work at emperor level for land battles,

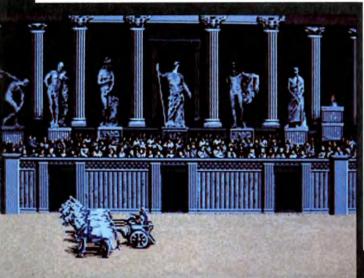
With the detailed graphic of Rome at the top of the screen, the game's main menu appears. From here you can build legions and fleets, or hold chariot races or gladiatorial combat.







see this chariot selection screen. The medium chariot is more expensive than the light, but it's also more durable.

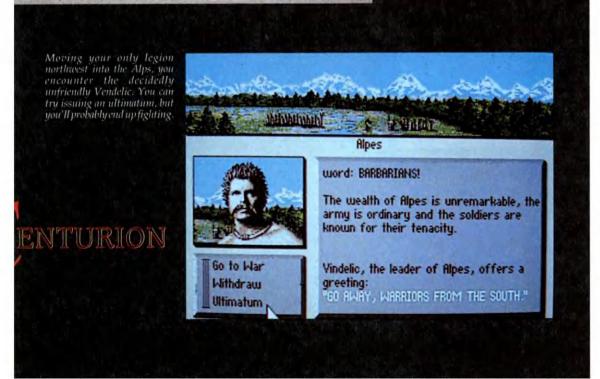


Before the chariot race begins, you find yourself inside the coliseum, standing before statues of the gods and goddesses. It's an imposing sight, but one you'll see again if you ever become Ćaesar.

senator level for chariot racing, legionnaire for naval battles, and galley slave for gladiatorial combat all at the same time. This is unquestionably a feature more games should employ, since it allows you to adjust the game's play to suit your preferences.

Graphically, Centurion is extremely strong. From the opening screen showing Rome's founders, Romulus and Remus, with their wolf mother to the different depictions of provinces to the screens introducing naval battles, chariot races, and gladiatorial combats, Centurion artist Jim Sachs (a renowned Amiga artist) demonstrates an excellent ability to provide a period feel for the game. The most spectacular graphics, however, are reserved for the battle scenes. Here, animated armies—both yours and the enemies — adopt and carry out various battle formations.

When you move a legion into an unconquered province, you first encounter that territory's leader (e.g. Vercingetorix of Gaul). You can attempt to ally with that province, or you can demand that it surrender. If the province doesn't capitulate (which is usually the case), you must either withdraw your legion or enter into battle.



Romans Aren't Fought in a Day

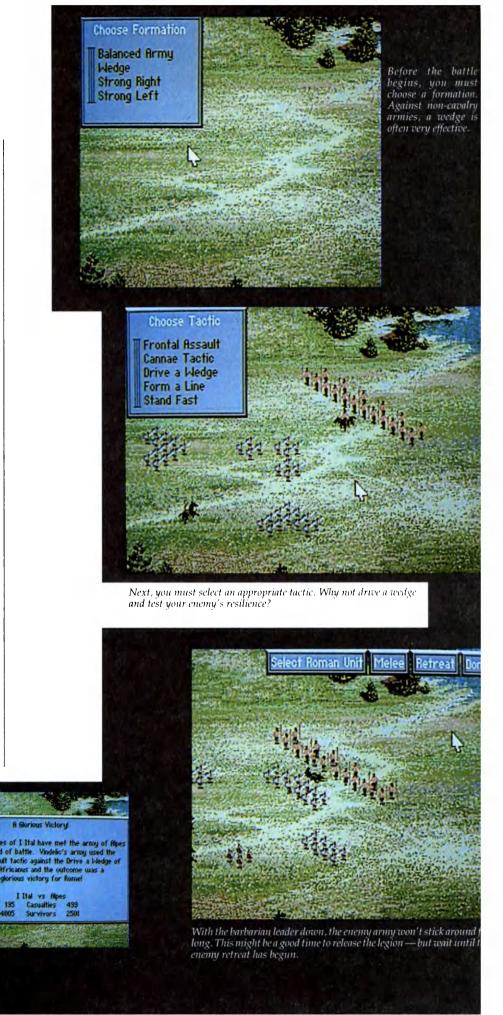
If you decide to fight, you must first select a formation for your army. You can choose from among four formations: balanced, wedge, strong right, or strong left. Each formation offers different tactical options, one of which you choose next. In balanced formation, you can opt for Scipio's defense (which enabled the general to defeat Hannibal), drive a wedge, outflank, or stand fast.

With wedge formation you can use the Cannae tactic (from the 216 BC battle that Hannibal won), drive a wedge, or form a line. By strengthening one flank or the other, you can sweep right or left or you can mass your troops in the middle. Once you choose your tactic, the music sounds, and troops from each side move forward and execute their respective tactical maneuvers.

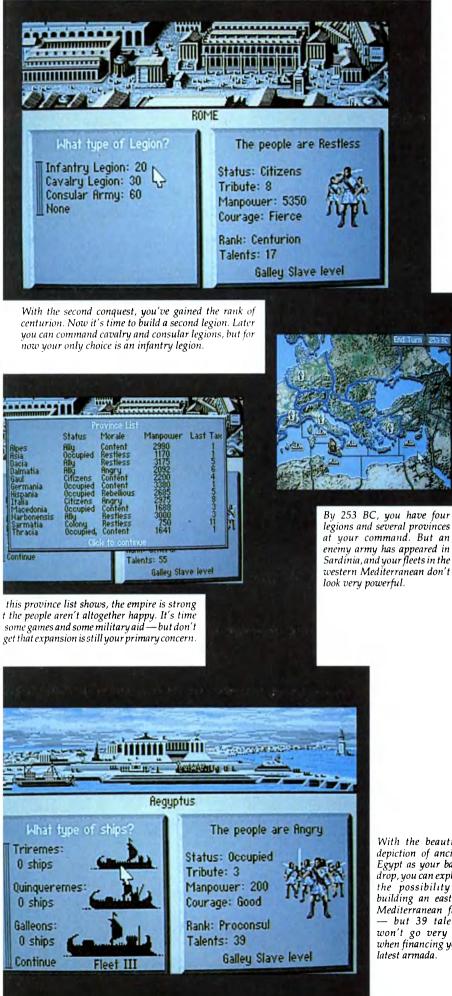
Once battle has begun, you can sit back and watch. If all goes well, there's no point in intervening. But if you decide that a different strategy is called for, you can change the course of the battle by making some choices. Stop the battle by going to the Pause menu. Then click on any individual cohort (fighting unit), and you can order it to move to another area of the battlefield or melee with the closest enemy unit. This is only possible, however, if that cohort is within command range of the leader (i.e., you), repre-

If the enemy is retreating, you can prevent their escape by commanding the entire le-

sented by a lone figure on horse-



With only 195 casualties, you have driven the Alpine hordes from the field. This will certainly help your reputation.



With the beautiful depiction of ancient Egypt as your backdrop, you can explore the possibility of building an eastern Mediterranean fleet but 39 talents won't go very far when financing your

gion into melee. Use this option carefully, though, because destroying the enemy means you'll have greater trouble recruiting soldiers from that province (they're dead, after all). For the most part, it's best just to let them go.

Battles in Centurion are colorful and fascinating. Players of miniatures wargames will immediately recognize that what happens on the battlefield is essentially an animated version of their own colorful hobby. The only problem with the combat system is that you must select your formation and tactics before you actually see the enemy army on the screen.

You're given some information about your enemies when you first enter the province, but only about their size and fighting zeal, not about the proportions of cavalry to infantry or the actual number of troops. This strange design decision makes surprise possible, but it also means that "stand fast" is almost always the recommended tactic to choose. This aspect of Centurion can clearly stand revision.

One addition to the Centurion battle system would go far to extend the game's realism. Only two battlefields are depicted: a grassy area and a desert area. It would be nice if the defender were able to choose the type of terrain on which to fight by offering regions of hills, open ground, rivers, or even mountains (where applicable). Not only would such a system increase the visual appeal of the battles even further, it would also require greater thought about which formation and tactic to

Naval battles are less involved, and in fact are on par with gladiatorial combat and chariot racing as diversionary arcade exercises. Your entire fleet doesn't appear on the map; instead, only your flagship shows, fighting only the enemy flagship. You can steer toward the enemy vessel and ram it, board it, or simply fire a catapult. The idea is to sink the enemy flagship or lower its crew's morale so you can board it and defeat its sailors in handto-hand combat.

Let the Games Begin

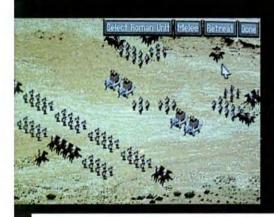
Chariot races and gladiator combat both contain a great deal of historical flavor. Before racing your chariot, you must choose between light, medium, or heavy chariots. Heavier chariots are more expensive, but they give you an advantage over lighter vehicles. You can then bet money on a race or engage in skulduggery. The latter involves bribing an opponent, hiring a physician to drug your horse, or invoking the help of the gods. Once on the track, you can whip your horses or even your opponent. The trick is to stay on your chariot until the end of the race, and, obviously, to place first.

The citizens of Rome demand frequent gladiator shows. Your goal here is to bet on the winning gladiator — a palatable proposition, since you control the movements of the fighter on whom you've wagered. You can choose to pit your gladiator against an equal or better gladiator, or against a dangerous animal. Once the battle is over, you must decide whether to let the fallen fighter live(thumbs up) or die(thumbs down). Your decision determines the general level of citizen contentment.

All of these features, however-land battle, naval battle, chariot races, and gladiatorial combat— are sideshows to the strategic game. At the beginning of every turn, you see a map of Europe with your legions and fleets (and those of your enemies) displayed as icons. By clicking on a province you control, you bring up a menu, from which you can select Legions, Plunder, Tribute, Hold Games, Build Fleet, See Province List, or a combination of any or all of the choices.

By selecting Legions, you can upgrade or strengthen existing legions or build new ones. You can also move legions from one province to another. By choosing Build Fleets, you can add triremes (cheap), quinquiremes (not-so-cheap), or

The gorgeous naval battle screen gives an authentic flavor to the game. Notice the Roman eagle on the mainsail. 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 bits Curenaica The wealth of Cyrenaica is small, the army is ordinary and the soldiers known for their lack of courage. Bocchus, the leader of Cyrenaica, offer Friendly a greeting: Diplomatic Aggressive Each naval battle features only two ships. Fire your catapults, but ram your Now that you're getting more powerful, the lead opponent if you must. You can also board of other provinces are starting to listen to y his ship. Bocchus of Cyrenaica seems willing to listen why fight if you don't have to? The wealth of Carthago is immense, the army is strong and the soldiers are known for their fierce courage. If you know Roman history at all, you'll recognize this guy. Hannibal of Carthage has elephants at his command and Hannibal, the leader of Carthago, offers his army is very, very strong. Friendlu Try diplomacy first, but don't Diplomatic | expect quick résults. On the fields of Carthage, you a Hannibal join battle. Elephan lead the way and your troops do like standing up to them. careful, and avoid combat wh vou can.



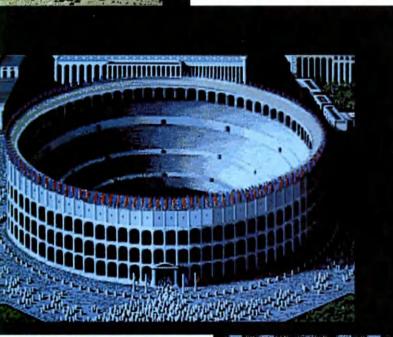
This is the same battle with Hannibal, but now two things have changed. You've selected the highest difficulty level, and you're using a different battle formation.



This time, your cohorts have begun to panic at the mere sight of the charging elephants. At the emperor difficulty level (and history aside), the battle with Carthage won't be easily won.



The elephants have crashed through the line, but now they're turning. With luck, they'll charge back into the Carthaginian lines. But don't count on it.



Aore detailed graphics show the beauty of the ancient inphitheater. The gladiatorial games are held inside.



If you defeat the warrior on the left, you'll have to decide whether he deserves to live or die. It's not an easy decision, but your popularity rides on it.

galleons (pricey) to your fleet; you need fleets to transport your legions to islands such as Sardinia or Britannia. If you choose to hold games, you'll enter the chariot race or gladiatorial combat sections of the game, while Tribute lets you raise or lower taxes. If you plunder, you'll gain a lot of money, but you'll probably annoy the natives.

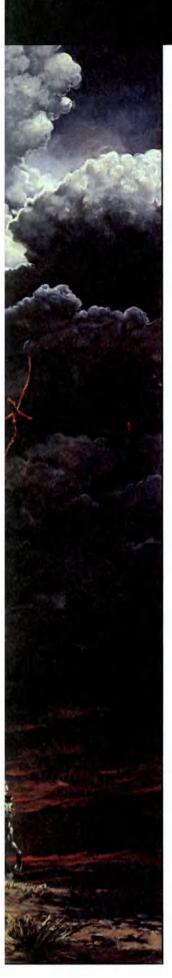
This menu-driven strategy system is surprisingly easy to use. The instruction manual helps you get started, but with a few exceptions (building an adequate navy for large legions, or figuring out the mechanics of naval combat and coliseum games) you probably won't need it. Just take your mouse or keyboard and start selecting the items that seem logical.

Build legions and move them, and select the battle formations and tactics that seem worthwhile. If you keep your first game at the galley slave level, you won't even lose many combats. By the time you're ready to increase your difficulty levels, you'll probably want to read the manual — if only to see how much else you can do.

Centurion is a highly capable game merging politics and military strategy. Its battlefield graphics and mechanics are nothing less than inspired, and are continually a joy to watch. As a political game it suffers from allowing only one player, and by making negotiation with foreign provinces almost pointless. It's also unfortunate that the southern Gallic tribe is (ahistorically) depicted as near-Neanderthals, though the rest of the provinces are fine (if occasionally a bit anachronistic).

But conquering Europa is a fascinating challenge, as real Roman generals and consuls also apparently considered it. With its epic flavor and its excellent graphics and interface, *Centurion* brings ancient Rome very clearly to life.





Champions of Krynn

NEIL RANDALL

Most fantasy role-playing games seem to come in series. The Bard's Tale, Wizardry, Ultima, and Might and Magic are all popular, all have their own systems, and all exist not in one installment but two, three, or even five or six. The most recent group added to this list, SSI's Advanced Dungeons & Dragons series, is proving itself every bit as popular as the rest.

In fact, SSI's AD&D games are computerized versions of the role-playing game that started the add-on trend. Dungeons and Dragons, released over a dozen years ago by a war games company called Tactical Studies Rules (TSR), became so popular so fast that TSR found itself producing add-on after add-on. The company expanded, fell on some hard times, retrenched, and expanded once more. Yet despite all the turmoil, one thing was constant: D&D, and its more complex version, AD&D, remained the most played roleplaying games of all. And the add-ons just kept coming.

The add-ons sold well for one main reason: Once a player mastered the basic system, it was to much more enjoyable to add to that system than to learn a brand new one. For the same reason — the enhancement of an already enjoyed mastery of a system — publishers of computer RPGs (role-playing games) adopted the series concept. In a way, it's like watching a new NFL season. You already know the rules; what's



At last, you've found the ultimate enemy. Myrtani awaits you, and his power is awesome

interesting now are the variations and unknowns.

The Need for Innovation

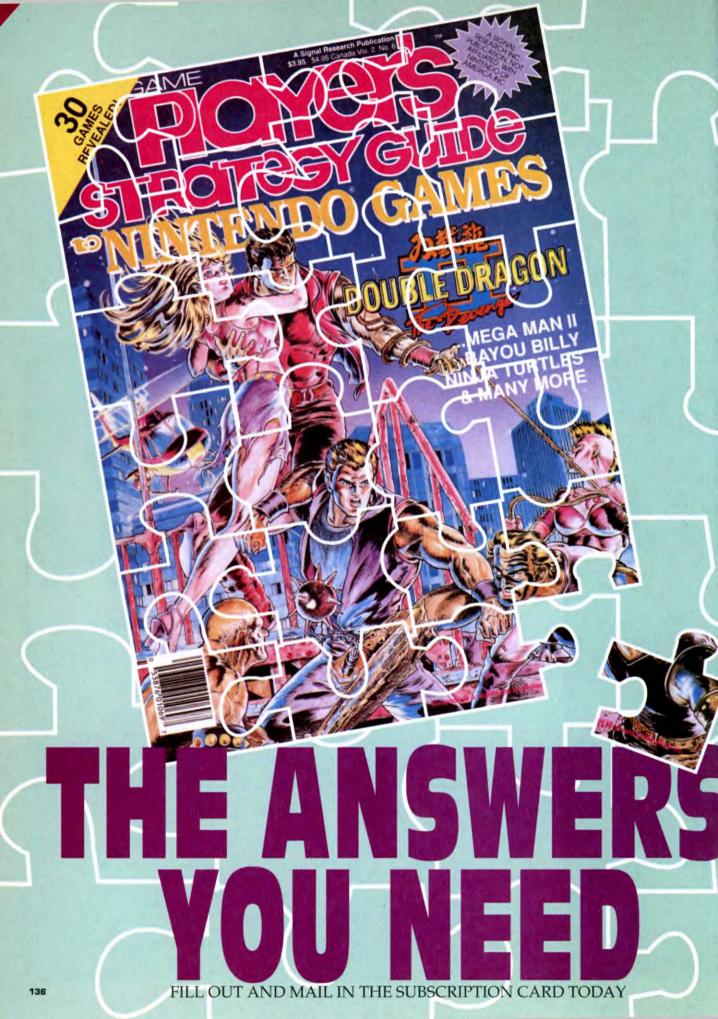
Champions of Krynn is the third installment in SSI's AD&D series. The first two, Pool of Radiance and Curse of the Azure Bonds, have combined sales exceeding 300,000, so the popularity of the series is obvious. But for Krynn to succeed it had to be different — a series will sell only if there's reason to buy the next installment.

Victor Penman, the leader of the Krynn project for SSI, was well aware of the need for innovation. "With Krynn," he explained, "we could no longer count on the unique feel of the game to carry us through." Players who had worked their way through Pool and Curse

would need new features to keep them interested, and the SSI design team was determined to provide those features.

For newcomers and veterans to the series, a quick explanation of how the SSI/TSR collaboration came about might be necessary. Those who have not played one of these games also need a quick run-through of the system in order to understand the extent of the changes.

"Originally," said Penman, "almost three years ago, TSR made it known that they were interested in licensing their AD&D system to a computer game publisher. Several companies showed strong interest. I was one of the people who went to TSR in early '87 to present SSI's case for why they should give the license to us. We emphasized that, if neces-





here's no point in holding back against Myrtani. Tarismor has memorized four reball spells and an ice storm spell. She knows the fireball will work wonders, and he readies it now.

ary, we would devote all the company's resources necestary to making it work right."

That focus, along with SSI's respected expertise in games emphasizing combat they had been publishing sistoric games since well before the advent of the IBM PC), clearly sold TSR on the strategy.

"Officially and contractually," Penman continued, "we have the exclusive license to 10 games on D&D and AD&D for the home computer market. But TSR approves everything before its release. We weren't sure exactly how this would work out, but they've been extremely reasonable very eager to work with us. Wetalk with Jim Ward [of TSR] about the content of the games and the story lines, and once we have something we all agree is good we go ahead and work with it.'

As for Ward's role in the creation of the computer adventures, Penman indicates that he has made some specific suggestions—like easing the way the system generated icons and allowed clerics to turn undead—that have improved play considerably. And because the designers "work very closely with TSR all the way through the development," approval for release is very quick in coming.

SSI's *AD&D* System

To adapt AD&D to a computer market meant preserving several integral elements of the original system. First and foremost, the game had to allow a party of adventurers — all perhaps of different races, classes, and levels — to seek out and solve fantasy adventures. Second, AD&D's magic system, in which clerics and magic-users must memorize spells before they can use them (in fact must memorize each one more than once if they want to use it more than once) had to





The fireball spell has devastated the battlefield. Only Myrtani remains, and everyone in the party is seriously depleted. Leorlian the cleric is too weak to work a spell on his own.

be kept intact.

Third, characters had to be able to advance in levels according to the *AD&D* experience point system. And fourth, combat had to be emphasized because *AD&D* is a combatintensive game.

You begin a game of *Pool*, *Curse*, or *Krynn* by creating characters, then placing them in the party. Characters range in race from human through dwarf, elf, and even kender,

depending on the particular game. Then you assign them to classes — paladin, ranger, knight, fighter, thief, cleric, mage, or a combination of two or more — and determine their individual characteristics. Finally, in a wholly unique touch, you design the icon that will represent each character on the screen during combat. Penman explained that the icon system brings to the computer system the popular idea of using mini-



The battle has taken an enormous toll, but Myrtani is destroyed. The fighting's not over yet, but now is the time to collect the spoils.



Oh great, more foes to fight. If these dragons are any good at all, you know you don't have a prayer. Failure looms, even at the end.

atures in the board game.

To memorize magic in the computer system, you must choose Encamp from the main menu. This places the entire party in camp, during which you can heal characters, transfer items from one character to another, save games, alter the party's march order, and memorize or copy spells.

After selecting which spells you want the cleric/mage to have, you must let that character rest to provide enough time to memorize them. Unless you're in a completely safe place (an inn, for example), the rest period will often be interrupted by a group of enemies. Keeping your magic-users useful, then, requires both strategy and luck.

Combat is the heart of these games because, as Penman explains, "in most AD&D games played, combat takes up more time than anything else, and SSI attempted to port AD&D to the computer as accurately as possible." If SSI's system draws any sustained criticism, in fact, it is in the sheer amount of combat that occurs. At times, it becomes frustrating — especially if your party has just squeaked out a victory only to face yet another powerful set of foes. Combat in the early sections of the game is exciting; random encounters in mid-game are often simply irritating.



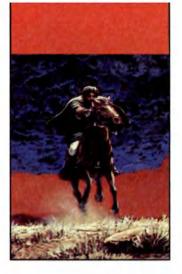
Fortunately, Tas has found some healing potions. Good thing, too, because this red dragon looks alarmingly ferocious. One last battle, and then you can rest. At least, you hove so.

But this is not to denigrate SSI's combat system. Unlike many computer fantasy RPGs (in which you don't actually see the combat played out), these games provide you with a full tactical battle display in which you can control each character individually. They can move, attack, defend, cast spells, and even give up, all at your choosing. If you want, the

computer will play the combat out, although you won't want to entrust it to solving important battles. And just like AD&D, your characters seem to miss more often than they hit — even in advanced levels.

WHAT'S NEW IN CHAMPIONS OF KRYNN

Champions of Krynn differs from the first two installments in several important ways. The biggest single change, according to Penman, is the fact that players can now select a level for the game. Previously, you had no control over how powerful your own forces were in comparison to enemy forces, except as the system allowed



you advance in rank. In Krynn, you can use the Alter command in the Encamp menu to select one of five different difficulty levels.

"This was a controversial



Leorlian prepares to cast his fireball spell. He doesn't want to harm his teammates, so he'll place it between the dragons. Sorilia has already destroyed one dragon with a single blow from the Dragonlance.



In the heat of battle, Liosian considers changing weapons. His long sword +2 is strong, but he might do better with a two-handed sword. Anything to finish off one of the dragons.



With his five comrades fallen aroun him, Liosian slashes with his swor and destroys the last dragon. A unlikely hero, he has nevertheles emerged triumphant.

decision," Penman says, "and not everybody at SSI was in fa vor of it. My opinion is that w have a tendency to make ou games too tough for man people, especially those who just want to see what this kind of game is like. We were hop ing in Krynn to attract nev players to the system, and that' where the different levels cam in. If the dedicated hardcor gamers want a challenging game, they can notch it up and play the toughest game we have. But the novices won't ge frustrated by having their part quickly die, especially if the choose the powerful pre-gen erated party included on the disk.

Other changes abound The possible character classe are humans, half-elves, Silva nesti elves, Qualinesti elves, hil dwarfs, mountain dwarfs, and kender, most of which didn' appear in Pool or Curse. Clericare divided into good, neutral or evil types (only the first two are available to player-characters), and each selects a god to worship who grants specia



Nith Myrtani and the red dragons destroyed, the danger to the Good Armies has bassed. You are heroes, and you will be well rewarded.

The dragons have dropped you off near the outpost where you started the game. Enter, and you'll know what it's like to be celebrated heroes.

powers and extra spells.

Similarly, there are three ypes of mages — those of the White Robes, Red Robes, and Black Robes — each governed by one of Krynn's moons, and the moons have a real effect on the game. And the game introduces the Solamnic Knight as a character class, with three levels of this class as well.

Why all the changes? They were simply dictated by the books from which the setting was taken. The AD&D system offers three fully developed worlds in which to adventure: Greyhawk, Forgotten Realms, and Dragonlance. Pool and Curse were set in the Forgotten Realms, while Krynn shifts to a Dragonlance setting. TSR's Dragonlance books are extremely popular fantasy fiction, and Penman says that SSI hopes the use of that setting will draw more players to the computer system because of the connection to the books.

What the changes confirm is SSI's commitment to the AD&D universe. By using the established AD&D settings as the basis for such fundamental game elements as races and character classes, SSI's designers prove that they are trying to work within the spirit of these settings. Readers of the Dragonlance novels will recognize many characters and themes, and even the tone of knightly heroism is captured by the inclusion of such elements - which Penman attributes to SSI's Dave Shelley — as a series of tests within a former knight's tomb.



The victory celebrations begin, but you have little heart for them. Some in your party are unconscious; others are dead. You can heal the former, but you need advanced clerics to revive the others.

Champions of Krynn plays well. A common story line guides you through the adventure from start to finish, and each location provides something beyond mere fighting to keep you interested. On the second easiest level, the game can be played to completion in about 60-80 hours — it takes much longer, of course, at the highest levels. Best of all is the flavor generated by the different types of knights, mages, and clerics. Putting two parties with different character types through the adventure at the same time, comparing their progress to one another, is a very enjoyable possibility.

SSI's series will, of course, continue. As in all fantasy RPGs, it would be nice to see increased development in the

role-playing aspects, but, as Penman explained, "Computers handle combat better than they handle dungeon-mastering." Still, working toward a good computer dungeon master would demonstrate even further how serious SSI is about transferring *AD&D* to the electronic world.





Champions of Krynn is over. All that remains is to raise from the dead those who can be raised, then save the game and explore as you wish. In the next AD&D game, you'll be able to use the same characters.





Gwenhyver is waiting for you in the rose bower. Despite her passionate love for Launcelot, she has a pure love for you and gives you an item of protection.

Conquests of Camelot: The Search for the Grail

LESLIE MIZELL



And no one is happ'ly-ever-aftering.

Theonce-shining kingdom of Camelot is now divided. Knight opposes knight, the Christian God is weighed against the Roman god Mithra, and Gwenhyver is in love with Arthur's most beloved liege. Unless there's a resurgence of the laws of chivalry, Camelot is doomed.

Merlin believes that if the Holy Grail—the legendary cup Christ used during the Last Supper — is found, Camelot would return to its former splendor. King Arthur sent his three bravest knights, Gawaine, Launcelot, and Galahad, on a quest to locate the Grail, but none of them returned. Now the task is left to Arthur himself, who must complete the crusade before Camelot falls into ruins.

Only in legends are beautiful ladies transformed into ugly hags by a magic spell. Luckily, you don't have to break the news to the restored Lady Elayne that her beloved knight is dead.



Though there are only a few items you need in Merlin's chamber, the room holds a vast wealth of knowledge of ancient legends. So be sure to study the map and tapestry before you depart.



You must unseat the Black Knight three times before you're declared victorious. It takes nimble fingering of your keyboard to move the lance and shield into their defensive and offensive positions.



Your first battle, and you emerge unscathed. Rest assured that the Black Knight isn't as easy to deal with as these wild boars.



Once you've beaten the Black Knight, you can free Sir Gawaine from his shackles. Your duties do not end there, however. If left in the woods, your brave knight will certainly perish.



Conquests of Camelot is Christy Marx's first game for Sierra. Marx, the author of the "Iem" TV cartoon series and the "Sisterhood of Steel" comic books and graphic novel, worked with her husband, professional illustrator Peter Ledger, to research the Arthurian myths and legends. The two took out all the fluff and soap opera - Arthur being transformed into birds and fish, the Sword in the Stone, Mordred's fight for the throne and the result is a game rich in atmosphere and detail. Even if you grew up reading Morte d'Arthur, Idylls of the King, and all the other Arthurian tales, you'll learn something new while playing Conquests of Camelot.

SIR GAWAINE AND THE BLACK KNIGHT

As Arthur, your quest begins within your own castle. First collect mundane items such as chain mail and money, then concentrate on objects with more magical powers. Gwenhyver will give you an enchanted rose for protection, and Merlin has prepared a lodestone for you to use as a compass. Prepare yourself spiritually as well as physically; the castle has its own chapel, and you should spend some time in prayer. Don't leave the castle without a room-by-room search



you're not very good at puzzles, you may have trouble getting past the riddle ones. Save the game before the first riddle is asked; if you get stumped, you can renter the game and try your luck with a new batch of questions.



he Old Ones hold the key — literally — to the Mad Monk's treasure. Cross their acorporeal palms with silver and they disappear, leaving behind the key to the ocked well.



'here are few wrong paths to follow in Conquests of Camelot since the game von't let you visit any unnecessary locations. Your first stop after the forest hould be the home of the Lady of the Lake — Ot Moor.



Solving the mystery of the Language of the Flowers isn't difficult as long as you have your Liber ex Doctrina at hand. Here again, you can save the game before playing and, if you're stumped, reenter the action with a different set of questions.

— once you leave the castle grounds, you won't be able to reenter.

As you search for supplies, question everyone you meet about your three lost knights. They provide the information that will help you decide where to begin your search. If you listened carefully, you know to ride into the woods. Galahad will be the first knight you rescue.

For the most part, the forest is filled with annoyances rather than dangers. Some creatures can be bribed into passivity, while others provide valuable weaponry. Your true foe is in the center of the weald — the Black Knight, the very man who captured Gawaine. Be brave enough to accept his challenge of a joust, but don't forget that whoever is unseated three times must admit defeat.

During your joust (and don't forget to save your game before the screen changes to the jousting mode), one set of keys controls your shield; another, your lance. You'll probably die a few times before you learn to move your weapons in tandem, then a few more times before you learn to lower the lance immediately. The perspective of the jousting screen makes it very difficult to tell if you're going to land a blow,

and it's even more difficult to see his blows hit you. Watch the Black Knight's shield; he moves it into position as he's riding toward you. If he protects his right side, it's fairly easy to land a blow on his left.

Once the Black Knight has been dealt with, you'll find Gawaine chained to a tree nearby. The knight is near death, so it's not enough just to break his shackles. Each of the three knights must be saved, not simply removed from danger. So give Gawaine your horse, and he'll return to Camelot safely.

Your expedition into the forest is nearly complete: You have only to save Lady Elayne, solve the mystery of the riddle stones (quite a task if you're playing the game alone), defeat the Mad Monk, and earn a key from the Old Ones. The key opens a locked well which

holds a secret treasure. Once you have the treasure, backtrack until you return to the map of Britain. It's time to rescue Sir Launcelot, your favor-

ite knight—and Gwenhyver's favorite, too.

SIR LAUNCELOT AND THE LADY OF THE LAKE

You've learned from your conversations that Launcelot was last seen on his way to question the Lady of the Lake. Follow his path, and you'll end up in the frozen wasteland of Ot Moor.

The horizontal path you originally follow is soon blocked by snow, so it's clear you must cross the ice to reach the Lady of the Lake. But the cracked ice is dangerously thin in places — if only you had some protection. Wait! Didn't



From Ot Moor you should go to the port city of Southampton for your voyage the Holy Land. If you don't have enough gold to pay for your voyage, start usin silver coins until your passage is secured.



There's an old Arabian saying: Never trust water when skeletons lie on its shore. OK, it's not an old adage — but it's still good advice.

Gwenhyver say the rose she gave you would shield you from harm? Under its sheltering spell, you can cross the floes without fear.

Though the Lady of the Lake seemed benevolent when she gave you Excalibur many years ago, she's evidently become heartless and cruel with the passage of time. Launcelot is trapped in a column of ice, and the Lady of the Lake has a similar fate in store for you unless you can pass a test of wisdom.

Using the section of the Liber ex Doctrina (the game manual) on the Language of the Flowers, you must identify three blossoms from a bush of ten. The Lady of the Lake asks a riddle to identify each flower. for example, if the answer to the riddle is "true love," you would select the forget-me-not on the bush. It's an easy test, but one mistake could put you in cold storage forever.



You must prove your bartering skil. in the Jerusalem bazaar. Almost et eryone here has a secret need that ca be filled by one of the other vendors.

Once you've passed the trial of the Language of the Flowers, Launcelotis freed and spirited away to Camelot There's only one knight left to rescue, but Galahad is far from home. Go to Southampton and book passage on a boat that can take you to Gaza in the Holy Land.

SIR GALAHAD LOCKED IN THE CRADLE OF THE DEEP

Your trek across the desert to Jerusalem is not without dan ger, and no sooner do you step inside the city walls than you are robbed of every cent you carry. Your donkey has served you well, but his greatest gift may be the money he brings you when he is sold.

The Jerusalem bazaar is a bewildering line of stalls and shopkeepers. You should first



The Lady of the Lake sends Sir Launcelot back to Camelot after you've passed your test. Since Gwenhyver is undoubtedly anxious to nurse him back to health, you'd best hurry to finish your quest.



fatima obviously doesn't know that you are a married man and a chivalrous inight of the Round Table. Resist her advances, and she'll give you a final test to prove your valor.

talk to Tamra, the old apple seller. Buy a truth apple from her, then begin talking to the other peddlers. You'll find that each one has a secret desire for an object one of the others can provide. Use your bartering skills to help each one until you finally reach the inn-keeper. Accept his offer of lodging for the night.

After you've rested, you should stroll through the bazaar a final time. You'll finally be able to meet Ione, the girl with the cage of doves you saw so many times the day before. Ione, in turn, sends you to Fatima, who administers a final test of wisdom. After answering her questions about the six goddesses, you should be able to find the entrance to the catacombs without further ado.

It's in those dank, rat-infested depths that you find Galahad. Though he's at death's door, you have the power to heal him — possibly at the expense of your own life. Once the knight is safe, complete your search of the catacombs. You're looking for two things: the statue of Aphrodite, and the item which can bring that statue to life.

KING ARTHUR AND THE LAST CRUSADE

Aphrodite provides the plan for your escape from the catacombs, but Merlin provided the key long ago in Camelot. Don't forget that you have his lodestone, the Dark Ages' equivalent of a Boy Scout compass. Using it's northwardpointing needle, you can escape the moldering

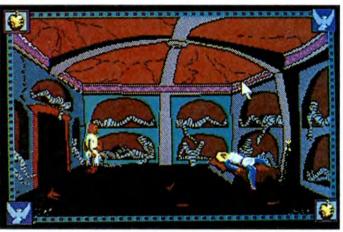


It's not difficult to match the descriptions of the goddesses with their symbols if you wrote them down when they were explained to you. Or were you so addled by the heat in the desert that you forgot this precaution?



The Thing does indeed have a golden treasure, but you'll regret it if you approach the creature without protection of some kind. Perhaps it's that pentacle that keeps him trapped inside the sarcophagus.

Naturally, you find yourself in a situation worse than the one you left. A final battle awaits you in the Temple of Aphrodite, but the Saracen though a formidable opponent — isn't difficult to defeat if you have the knightly virtue of patience. When your sword strikes him, you can see a flash



where the blow lands. Keep attacking the weakened area (while protecting your own body, of course), and he will soon fall. Forbearance is fundamental; quick moves and parries only drain your strength.

The Saracen vanquished, Aphrodite's spirit appears with the final clue you need to find the Holy Grail. You've saved your kingdom from desolation in the nick of time. There's no way to avoid being bitten by a rat when you enter the room where Sir Galahad lies near death. Now you're really caught on the horns of a dilemma: Whom do you save, yourself or your knight?



Aphrodite seems to be asking for something with her outstretched hand. Give her the golden apple, and she will make sure you escape the catacombs.

There's no denying that Conquests of Camelot is a beautiful game. The graphics are lovely (though when is Sierra going to come out with a VGA game?), and the borders on each screen almost turn them into pages from an illuminated manuscript. It's also not a difficult game to play: challenging for beginners, but still enjoyable for experts. The action is linear and logical — there are no wild goose chases interrupting the steady stream of adventuring.

And Conquests of Camelot won't disappoint those gamers who enjoy Sierra's scoring system, which assigns points to actions as a running tally on the player's progress. At the end of the game, you receive three scores — one in skill, one



The Saracen isn't as dangerous an opponent as it may seem. Wear the helmet he gives you and eat the apple before you start fighting. Remember: Slow and steady wins the race.

in wisdom, and one in soul. Of course, a drawback to this system is that when you replay the game, you won't know if a new action adds any points until the end.

The best thing about Conquests of Camelot is that it leaves the player thinking of the next adventure in the series. There are literally dozens of possibilities, especially when you consider that Arthur was really the only true character in this first adventure. Gawaine, Launcelot, Galahad, Merlin, and Gwenhyver played mere cameo roles. So until the next



Use the Liber ex Doctrina a final time to learn where Aphrodite has hidden the Holy Grail. Your quest is nearly at an end.



Safely back in Camelot, you place the Grail on the altar, knowing Camelot will be restored to its former glory.

crisis befalls Arthur's kingdom, don't let it be forgot that once there was a spot for happ'ly-ever-aftering—called Camelot!

GP



Camelot may be healed, but all may not be well. Has anything changed between Sir Launcelot and Queen Gwenhyver? And are the knights of your Round Table ready to uphold the laws of chivalry once again?

mended.

Hardware requirements: 512K minimum memory; VGA,MCGA,EGA,CGA, Tandy 16-color, or Hercules graphics; joystick and

mouse optional; supports

sound boards; 8 Mhz com-

puter or faster recom-





Choose your character from this list. Each has a balanced set of advantages and disadvantages, and different strategies must be used with each.

udging from the feedback from our readers, there are a lot of PC owners who like the idea of getting involved in a fantasy roleplaying game

whose early frustration with the genre has led them actively to shun new specimens.

(RPG),

but

The most common cause of that frustration? Game designers who try to out-clever the player by throwing him into no-way-out situations, forcing him to solve elaborate puzzles with no straight answer, having to map endless mazes, and — the most vociferous complaint of all — having to build experience in constant battles with rolls, orcs, and assorted mages.

Until recently, many of the most popular RPGs were designed for an audience with a ertain level of expertise. But as :he PC game market began to soften about 18 months ago, :he smarter programmers reilized that the hardcore dunzeons-and-dragons type of iudience was no longer large enough to support new games. And we started seeing userfriendly RPGs such as The Magic Candle and Ultima VI games in which the player had plenty of time to explore the fantasy environment, interact with the characters, and fight only at reasonable intervals or for some concrete reason.

King's Bounty

WILLIAM R. TROTTER



The easy setting gives you time to explore and figure out the game's dynamics — it doesn't mean that the enemies are easier to defeat.



New games begin at the castle of King Maximus. You must return there periodically to be promoted or to recruit new troops.



Each time you visit a town, you have a chance to acquire new spells, rent a boat, or take out a contract on one of the local villains.

Now comes King's Bounty, a charming and thoroughly likeable RPG from New World Computing that's the perfect introduction to the genre for someone who's felt its attractions but has hesitated to dig in

because of its reputation for difficulty. The game isn't without subtlety or challenge — it has plenty of both — but these attributes develop through the playing, instead of appearing as periodic bolts from the blue.

The levels of trickiness and difficulty rise in a curve that is roughly commensurate with the player's growing power, wisdom, and expertise. Frustrations arise, but by the time you encounter the really tough puzzles and battles, you've grown strong enough and cunning enough to handle them ... usually.

A KING WITHOUT HIS SCEPTRE

A long narrative which takes up the first half of the manual sets the background for the story, but you can skip it if you want - it tells you nothing essential to your success in the game. The premise is simple enough. The fantasy world in King's Bounty is comprised of four diverse continents populated by monsters, the undead, humans, and near-humans. Noble King Maximus has unified and ruled this chaotic land through the power of his Sceptre of Order.

Now a group of evil-doers, led by vile archmage Arech Dragonbreath, has stolen the sceptre and hidden it. The only extant map showing its location has been cut into 25 pieces: Each of the 17 thieves has one piece, and the other eight are buried with various artifacts of power, two on each continent.

Your quest, naturally, is to find the sceptre before time runs out, King Maximus dies, and



The two easiest villains are Hack the Rogue and Murray the Miser. You can probably defeat them with an army of less than 100 (excluding peasants, unless you're simply using them for cannon fodder.)

the four continents sink into terminal darkness and violence. On its hard setting, the game gives you 400 days in which to accomplish this; the average setting gives you 600; and the easy one gives you a luxurious 900-day framework. The time limits are the only differences in the three modes — the monsters and challenges are just as tough in the 900-day

game as they are in the 400.

You must track down and vanquish each of the villains and locate the eight hidden artifacts in order to assemble the map and find the

sceptre. Any time you visit a town, you can put a contract on a nearby villain, enabling you to gain fame and fortune by bringing in that particular miscreant. Beware of capturing villains who aren't under contract — you get a reward, but the bad guy is set free. The next time you run into him, he'll be even more powerful.

Once you've successfully captured a villain's castle, you should leave a garrison (at least in the first stages of the game), so that the fortress can't be reoccupied by monsters. The garrison need only provide token resistance — a few peasants work just as well as a costly bunch of knights — but it's a



You can either keep the money or give it to your troops to advance your leadership rating. A balance between selfishness and generosity is probably the best approach to take.

detail you may overlook in the heat of victory.

MONEY, MONEY

Your first decision must be to choose your character type: knight, paladin, barbarian, or sorceress. Each one has individual strengths and weaknesses — one may raise troops easily, while another may have enhanced spell-casting ability, and so on.

You can even play four games at once from your hard drive, using each type of character, different strategies, and parallel destinies. Since location and strength of monsters, treasures, bonuses, and

artifacts are chosen at random each game is completely different from any other.

Because overland travel is both difficult and exceedingly dangerous, one good basis strategy is to rent a boat and sail around the first continent looking for artifacts and for treasure chests which contain bonuses or money. You car either add the funds to you treasury or use them to increase your leadership rating by distributing the loot to you peasants.

Most treasure is guarded by enemy forces, but you have a chance before combat starts to see if your foes are too strong for you. If they are, you car usually scoot back to the boal and move on to a chest that's easier to snatch. Navigation and recordkeeping are easy because of the game's handy auto-mapping function.

The game advances by one-week increments. At the end of each week, your budget is flashed onto the screen. It you find yourself temporarily strapped for funds (a likely possibility), you can push a key and skip to "payday," when the king's weekly stipend is delivered. If you're racing the calendar to find the



You can view your character and statistics any time during the game. The higher your leadership rating, the more troops you can command in battle.



One good strategy is to rent a boat and sail around the entire continent, grabbing treasure chests wherever you find them and avoiding battles with stronger foes.



Periodically, you have a chance to recruit new types of soldiers. Remember that you can only have five different types of warriors in your army at any given time.



When organizing your forces, the two most important factors — other than sheer numbers — are skill level and morale.



sceptre, you can use a stoptime spell to freeze the game's internal clock while your party continues to travel.

In the first part of the game, it's a good idea to use your treasure chest bonuses to build your leadership rating. By the time you get through exploring Forestia, the second of the four continents, it's probably OK to be selfish and keep the money. After all, there's no point in having a huge leadership ability if you don't have enough gold to raise the kind of army you need.

Stay on the lookout for map-icons that give you access to other continents. They're usually just lying around in plain sight, yours for the taking. Once you have such a map, you can make quick, fairly safe raids into other continents, where the treasures are larger.

Once you're satisfied with the size of your treasury, recruit an army by returning to Maximus' castle or revisiting some of the warrior encampments you've discovered during your travels. Once you have a show of force, go after the two easiest villains, Murray the Miser and Hack the Rogue.

You ought to be able to defeat them with a fairly modest army (remember to buy siege equipment, however, or you can't attack them at all), and once you've done

The combat system in King's Bounty is simple and effective. You almost never have to fight a battle unless you want to.



In return for discovering treasure chests holding valuable mineral deposits, the king will cut you in for a percentage of the take — an easy way to increase your salary.

so, the king will promote you and raise your salary so you can *really* start building a powerful force.

FIGHTING THE DEAD AND UNDEAD

You can succeed in this game with an all-human army, an army of mixed humans and

> near-human types, oranarmy of the undead. It may be advantageous from time to time to use mixed forces, but be aware that the inclusion of zombies, ghosts, vampires, and

the like causes the morale of the other troops to fall. If the spooks and ogres hang around long enough, some of your best human units may just desert without warning.

Combat is straightforward: Missiles are fired, blows exchanged, and the computer keeps score. Since victory usually goes to the side with the most hit points, tactical expertise is slight, but there are things you can do to maximize your enemy's strength and minimize your own. As useful as magic is during the game, there's no one or no thing that can't eventually be killed with good old cold steel.

Still, some enemies are pretty scary when you first en-



Before you can capture the villains in their castles, you must go to the nearest town and invest a large sum of money in siege equipment. If your battle is successful, your investment is handsomely repaid.

counter them. Dragons, for instance, require 200 hit points to kill, and if you're attacking a castle defended by a half dozen of them, you've got your work cut out for you.

Nothing, however, is more disconcerting that your first encounter with ghosts. These creatures have a very nasty ability — if they kill someone in combat, that victim instantly becomes a ghost and joins the battle on the ghost's side! Say you're attacked by 20 ghosts and manage to kill ten of them. Those ten then attack you and kill 12 of your men. Now you have 22 ghosts to kill instead of 20, and 12 fewer men to do it.

So until you have several



At the end of each week, you're shown your budgetary figures. Money isn't everything, of course, but it does buy the most powerful monsters.

"turn undead" spells and a massive contingent of archers (elves preferred, but orcs will do), avoid the ghosts entirely. When you're strong enough to enter battle with a ghostequipped force, concentrate maximum firepower on them, and stay as far on the left side of the screen as possible. In this position, the ghosts can't get to you in one turn. If you can wipe them out before they kill anyone, you're safe and will probably win the battle handily.

Be sure to jot down the locations of the different warriors on each continent. As your fortunes increase, you should revisit the camps of barbarians, archmages, and the



The undead make powerful soldiers, but when you mix them with human warriors, the latter suffer a decline in morale. Who can blame them?

Not only does having a boat nearby gives you the option of avoiding battle, but it also makes it relatively easy to explore large parts of the four continents.

like in order to recruit larger forces. The larger your army, the better your chances of winning battles with the most powerful and dangerous villains.

The magical spells are useful and are more than worth the time and money invested in them. There aren't any tricks to earning the magic, either. Just save up 5,000 gold pieces, visit the chief magician behind

the king's castle, and you'vegotyour union card. After that, you can buy any overthe-counter spell you want, provided you keep a record of

which spells are available in which towns.



Some hillside entrances lead to teleportation warps that send you half a continent away. These can be useful in getting about, so write down their locations when you find them.

NO MUTINY ON THIS BOUNTY

King's Bounty is distinguished by a fine balance of details. Though you probably won't develop a coherent strategy until after a few false starts, the basic program is blessedly



Since the game has an automaticmapping feature, you won't waste time covering the same ground more than once.

straightforward and free of all those no-way-out boobytraps found in many RPGs. Your goals are clear, and everything you need to succeed is *there*, if you just use your head and figure out the right ways to employ the system's details.

Progress is, of course, fairly slow in the beginning, but as the game gets deeper and the time limit gets closer, the general pace of play becomes faster and more intense. By the time you're down to the last few villains, you should have a powerful army, loads of magic spells, and just barely enough time to succeed. Win or lose, the climactic weeks of game time are very exciting.



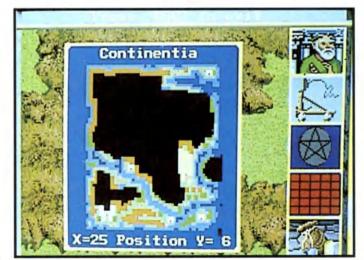
After you've got a fairly sizable weekly income, take magic instruction — unless you're already a sorceress.

King's Bounty features bright, colorful graphics and a very easy interface. Just push the O key to see all your options, then press another key to execute the particular step you desire. Once you get past the Tolkienesque introduction, the manual tells you everything you need to know to get started.

With its scope and complexity, King's Bounty is a fun game that you don't have to invest a major portion of your life to play. Newcomers to the fascinating, sometimes obdurate genre of RPGs will find that this game offers plenty of challenge, but deals out the frustrations and defeats with a just, even hand.

Veteran role-players will probably zip through it in fairly short order, but they too will have a good time. All the right ingredients for a stirring fantasy-world quest are here, and all the game's elements are nicely balanced.

GP



Sieges tend to be extremely tough and bloody battles. You might try recruiting a huge number of peasants and just throwing them at the enemy. They'll all die, of course, but they'll do some damage before they go — and they're cheap to recruit.

Hardware requirements: 384K minimum memory; VGA, EGA, CGA, or Tandy 16-color graphics.

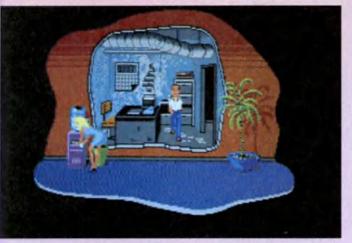


GARY MEREDITH

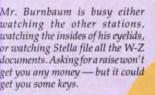
Lester P. Manley is going through a change of life. But as he sits in his minuscule office deep in the bowels of the WILL-TV building, he's not yet aware of this fact. He only knows that the "suits" in the conference room need his technical expertise once again. They probably just forgot to plug in something, but at least it gives him an excuse to walk the upper floors. If he's really lucky, he might catch a glimpse of the girl of his dreams, Stella Hart, Mr. Burnbaum's executive assistant.

Les hasn't expected all that much out of life so far. After all, given his background, he feels rather fortunate not to be asking people, "...and would you like fries and a drink with that?" But just once, he'd like to be on the receiving end of the attentions of a girl like Stella. So when station WILI announces its "Search for The King" contest and its \$1 million cash prize, Les figured it was now or never. If he had that kind of money, maybe even the notorious Lyla Libido might give him the time of day.

Hardware requirements: 640K minimum memory; VGA, EGA, MCGA, CGA, or Tandy 16-color graphics; 8 Mhz or faster recommended; hard drive recommended; mouse optional.



While the hierarchy at WILL-TV consists of many varied levels, it's a simple matter to tell who's at the top and who's at the bottom. There's no mistaking this as anything but the CEO's executive suite.







The building guard is more helpful asleep than he is awake. While he's grabbing a few Z's, Les should grab his dream. You never know when he might meet up with someone in need of something to live for.

Your quest really begins out on the street. But watch out for red herrings, such as the mysterious man in white. Don't try to chase him down inside the bus station.

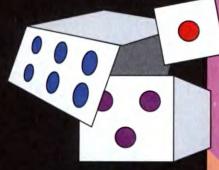


Quiet Desperation Revisited

For years, the nerds of the world had only one champion of their cause - the perennially perplexed Larry Laffer of Leisure Suit Larry fame. If anyone could constantly screw up and still come out on top, it was Larry. Now it seems Larry may have met his match. In Accolade's Les Manley in: Search for The King, we follow our intrepid hero from his humble beginnings as a videotape rewinder to the spotlight on stage at The Kingdom theme park - and beyond.

In between, Les is called upon, among other things, to pose as a reporter, clean up after circus elephants, break into hotel rooms, hobnob with Vegas showgirls, hitchhike across the country — even impersonate The King himself. It's all part of his quest to track down The King, present proof of his existence, and collect the big bucks (and hopefully Stella as well).





It's amazing the characters you meet in a bus station. Unfortunately, you aren't going to get much help here. Don't waste time trying to negotiate the railing... and don't have a cow, man, when you spot some celebrities.





This bus might be a good way to get to the next destination on your quest. At least it would if it were in running condition, if you could find a driver, and if Vegas had suddenly moved 3,000 miles eastward.

Anyone who has followed the adventures of Larry Laffer will feel right at home with *Les Manley*. The game interface, with its provisions for saving, loading, controlling speed, and so on, looks a bit different from the Sierra games, but works quite similarly. This is a definite plus because you really need to save the game a lot, and a clumsy interface would make that a frustrating exercise.

Saving the game often is a sensible move because not only are there are a number of ways in which Les can meet his demise, but you'll also probably find yourself returning to several scenes to pick up a particular item or perform a certain action you neglected the first time through.

This old brownstone is home to a rather eccentric lady and an essential item. If you thoroughly searched the storeroom at WILL-TV, you shouldn't have any problem getting past the door.





From the appearance of her apartment, Bobbi's life must have ground to a halt somewhere around 1977. Her devotion is impressive, but sadly misplaced. Taking the scarp would be doing her a favor.



Just let yourself drift back to those carefree days when a trip to the circus was all you asked of life. Try looking at everything. You never know who—or what—might help you win the contest.

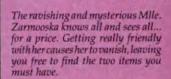




You probably didn't know that popcorn was a favorite of lions the world over. At least, this cat seems fond enough of the snack to let you pass unmolested and unmauled.

Fred and Alona are both people of few words — at least in English — but speaking to Alona might let you know why the show isn't going on. And until Fred performs, you can't get something from him you desperately need.

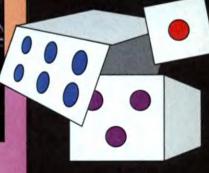




Don't forget to look at everything in a scene — especially since several important items aren't actually visible on the screen. For example, while you're in the WILL-TV building, you spot a guard sleeping at his desk. Normally, you'd just accept that you can't wake him up. But if you don't look at his dream — and take it — you won't get to Las Vegas with everything you need to complete the game.

Talking to everyone you meet can also fill in a lot of blanks in the puzzle. Not everyone is completely cooperative, but at least you don't have to worry about the truthfulness of any statements. Anything you're told is dependable. There aren't any deliberate attempts to mislead, although some of the information might be considered a little less than

complete.





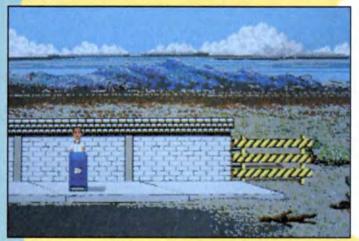




If you're stumped trying to find way to Vegas, look no further that the Test-O-Strength booth next to the main tent. The contestan doesn't have enough energy to ring the bell, but he can send of Lewinging westward.

If there is a criticism of Les Manley in : Search for The King, it's that the designers might be justa bit too tricky in scenes such as the one with the sleeping guard. Another example is inside Bobbi's apartment. Bobbi is the woman who first reported sighting The King. She also has a scarf you must have. But to get the scarf, you have to do a certain list of things in a certain order. You'll be itching to put your fist through your monitor before you get your fingers on that scarf.

The text parser is also overly sensitive about phrasing and word choice. Compound sentences will only confuse your poor computer, and the distinction between prepositions such as "in" and "on" might mean the difference between success and failure. Then too, the design of this kind of game is an extremely subjective affair. What seems eminently logical to one person may be totally baffling to another.



By now, you've probably realized that Helmut can't take the heat of re-entry. Your Thermos provided one solution to the problem, while the U.S. Postal Service can also help in both transporting Helmuland conserving your water.

What a strange thing to find in Vegas—a casino hotel. Well, what better place to pick up a few clues (and items) than The King's old stomping grounds? You might even meet up with his former flame, Lyla Libido.



The lobby decor takes tackiness to new heights. While the desk clerk won't help you much now, his assistance will be invaluable later on.





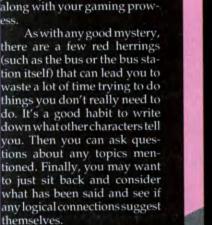


You've got to have the skeleton key on the cart, but how can you distract the maid? Try giving her some extra work to do. While you're in there, you also might want to give serious thought to dental hygiene.



The skeleton key gives you access to every area of the hotel, including the penthouse suite of Mr. Fabulous. Too bad you don't have any idea of what you're looking for here.

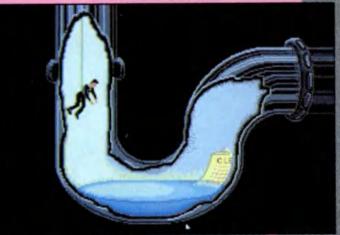




In short, if you can recall the

hair you pulled out trying to

get Larry from the beach to the airport in Leisure Suit Larry II, you have some idea of the mental tangents you may have to take to solve many of Les's problems. There's nothing so tough that you won't eventually arrive at a solution, but you may need a little luck to go



The cleaning receipt in the jacuzzi drain might be your ticket to an eventual rendezvous with The King, but the opening is too small for your hand. Helmut can help if you can help him get out of the drain.



There's a lot for you to look at by the pool, but if you're ever going to find The King, you'd better concentrate on drawing Mr. Fabulous away from Lyla Libido. Perhaps you could reach out and touch someone.





That phony page was a pretty underhanded way to get Mr. Fabulous out of the way — but it worked! While all Lyla's charms appear to be available to Les, he's really only interested in her sunglasses. Once a nerd, always a nerd.

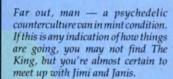


...And It Comes Out Here

In the best tradition of roleplaying adventures, Les Manley in: Search for The King requires you to work within a mostly logical framework. That is, you must perform tasks which usually lead to other tasks, and so on. Fortunately, the game doesn't take its linearity to an extreme, so if you do get stuck, you can go on to other areas where you might find an item or bit of information to help with a previous scene.

For instance, when Les goes to the circus, he must first earn his ticket into the big top by shoveling behind the elephants. With the ticket, he can enter the tent, but before he can get anywhere, he must somehow acquire popcorn to feed to the lion. Once inside, Les runs smack into another chain of logic when he talks to the acrobats, Fred and Alona.

Ah, the infamous Lyla Libido, former 15-year old mistress to The King himself. Watch out — she's broken stronger men than you just for the fun of it.









After a '60s time-warp trip to The Kingdom, you finally feel close to The King. There's lot's to see and do at The Kingdom, but Red's is where Les can strut his stuff and gain entrance to The Mansion.



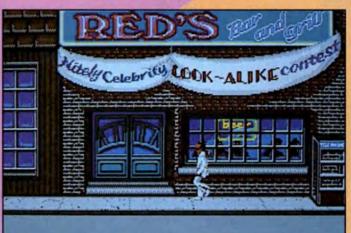
A quick look at your complimentary tourist map tells you everything you need to know about The Kingdom, including where to find the famous Red's Bar and Grill—where all the top impersonators go to be discovered.





Since the ladder to the high dive platform is slippery, Les must find a way for the acrobats to keep their footing. For that, he makes his way to Mlle. Zarmooska, where he's able to snag some candle wax (don't forget to pet the lizard, too). The wax goes to the strongman, Luigi, for his limp moustache. Les can make off with Luigi's rosin bag, which he takes back to Fred. Then Fred is finally able to make his high dive.

Luckily for Les, but unluckily for Fred, it turns out to be the acrobat's final dive. But you've found out what all Les's finagling was about — he's now able to pinch the cape of late and lamented Fred.



If you managed to pick up everything you need along the way, you should be able to emerge from that convenient phone booth with a fairly credible simulation of youknow-who.



You knew The King had been a conspicuous consumer, but this place surpasses your wildest suppositions on his lifestyle. Decorating it must taken every bit of glitter, velvet, and plastic on Rodeo Drive.

The master bedroom is so bright that dark glasses are probably an essential sleep aid. Les, however impressed he may be, should focus his attention on the bureau — and the secret within.







Since your previous impersonation of The King didn't go over too well with the discriminating crowd at Red's, you might try bulking up a bit with The King's favorite snack. You were listening back at Bobbi's, weren't you?

Ladies and Gentleman: Les

By visiting all the scenes and gathering information, you can then settle on a plan of action. You should be aware that the lack of strict linearity can hurt you as well. The game happily lets you go to the next locale, such as from the circus to Las Vegas, even if you haven't done everything you need to do beforehand. Once again, here's one reason why those saves are so important.

Graphically, Les Manley in: Search for The King is quite good. In fact, the extended VGA/MCGA graphics are, in selected scenes, excellent. You may find, however, that this extended mode won't run on your computer unless you purge it of all

TSR programs.



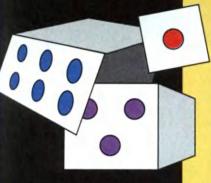


Now that you can adequately fill out the suit of The King, you need a mike and an axe to make your act perfect. The guitar is going to need some repair, however. Did you, perhaps, forget something back in Mr. Fabulous' suite?





isn't it amazing what a few extra pounds oan do? Les's dynamite performance won him accolades a fatal trampling by members of Local 417 of The King's Fan Club.

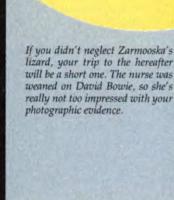




Les's visit to rock and roll heaven (and an autographed photo of The King leading an angelic combo) may make his death - and resurrection? more meaningful and reward-

This can cause a problem for mouse users on systems with recent versions of DOS. These versions take up more memory than do earlier editions - so much so that even the addition of a mouse driver may take up too much memory for the game to run in the extended mode. Since there's not that much difference between the normal and extended mode screens, this shouldn't hinder your enjoyment of the game.

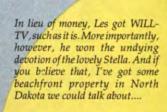
Les Manley in: Search for The King is one of those games that will have you beating your head against the wall — and enjoying every minute of it. As an exercise in twisting your mind nto new problem-solving positions, it's great. It may be a bit raunchy for some (and perhaps too obfuscatory for others), but hat's a part of its charm. For a first effort in this kind of interactive adventure, Accolade should be applauded, as well is encouraged to make good on the promise of Les Manley's ast scene... an encore venture or the hapless Les.





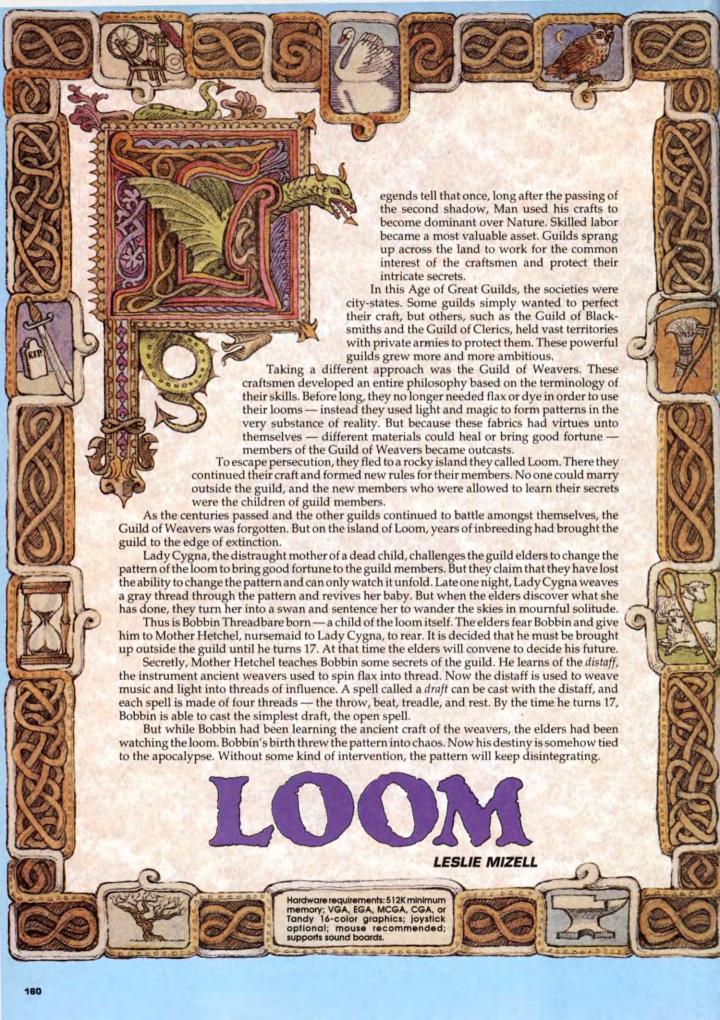


After all that Les had been through, it would have been nice to say that he got his million bucks, but it seems that WILL-TV had just been talking trash without the cash.









Loom is a delightful game to play for many reasons. For one, the graphics are absolutely spellbinding, even in a time when VGA graphics are becoming the norm. The richness of the colors in Loom is practically unmatched by any game, VGA graphics or not.

It is also an easy game to play. While those who thrive on role-playing adventures that take months to finish are going to miss the challenge, it's a breath of fresh air to anyone who has ever struggled to build experience points,

only to die repeatedly in battle. In Loom, you can't die. Did you catch that? You can't die.

Brian Moriarty, the *Loom* project leader, wanted to exorcise the extraneous elements from this game and leave players with just the characters' power. So the game consists of three operations: moving from guild to guild, selecting objects, and discovering new drafts and figuring out what drafts to use in different situations.

Point and click at objects, and most of them will teach you a draft. You can spin a draft on most of the objects, too, but you have to discover if a draft in your position opens objects, untwists them, dyes them, or performs any of the other influences you can read about in the Book of Patterns. It's important to remember that any spell that can be woven can be *unwoven* as well. As you collect the drafts, you'll often find that they contain threads not yet in your possession. You begin the game with the ability to spin three threads — C, D, and E. You earn the F thread when you leave the island, and the other threads are earned as you gain experience.

You can set the difficulty of your game by selecting the Practice game, in which the threads are named for you as a draft is spun; the Standard game, in which you must match the threads with the glowing distaff without help;

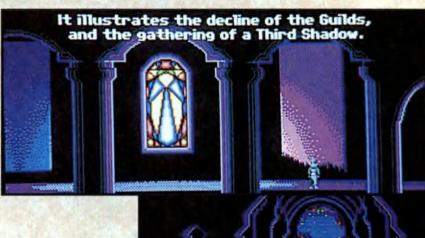
and the Expert game, in which you must play the distaff without any help.

Loom is a linear game — you won't be able to progress without completing certain tasks. If you're stuck for more than ten minutes, you've probably left some corner unsearched or some draft unspun. Large sections of the game, especially those that further the plot, are computer controlled, so you'll be watching the game as much as you play it. But both watching and playing Loom is a rewarding experience for any game fan.



Bobbin has been an outcast from the Guild of Weavers until now, dawn on his seventeenth birthday. As the game begins, the elders are meeting to decide his destiny.







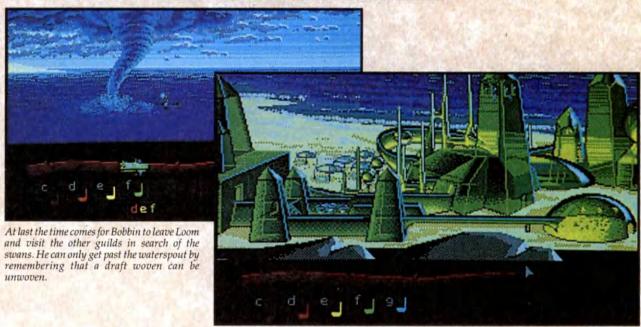
When the elders are sent outside the pattern, Mother Hetchel explains to Bobbin that it is his destiny to prevent chaos from destroying the pattern of the universe.







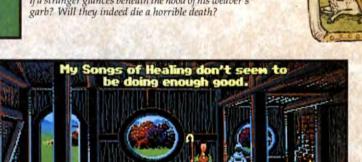
Though gold and riches are of no use to members of the Guild of Weavers, Bobbin can still learn a valuable draft inside this tent.

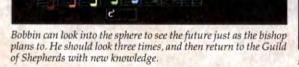


Members of the Guild of Glassmakers value clarity above all else. They won't believe the existence of anything they can't see with their eyes.



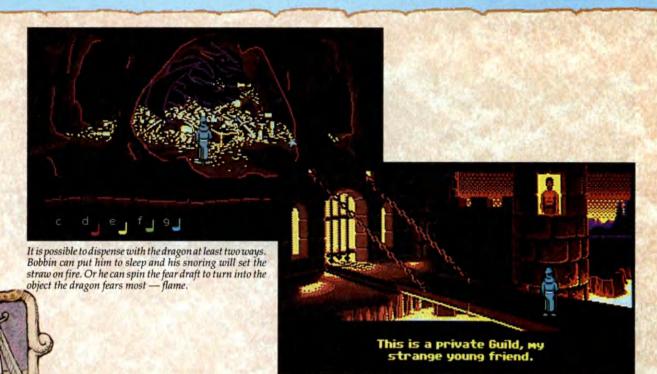
Master Goodmold tells Bobbin a legend that the weaver had heard rumors of himself. What happens if a stranger glances beneath the hood of his weaver's garb? Will they indeed die a horrible death?



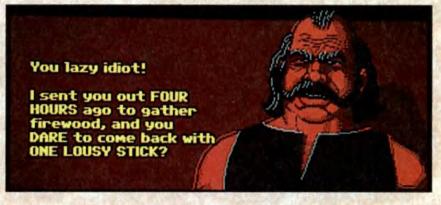




Bobbin learns several drafts from the shepherds — sleep, stealth, and healing. Unfortunately, he is unable to help this lamb until he earns the A thread needed to spin the healing draft.



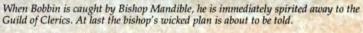
The Guild of Blacksmiths is very powerful — and works closely with the Guild of Clerics. Only members are allowed to pass through its iron gates. If only Bobbin looked like that young boy Rusty he met in the hills.

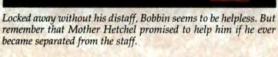


Was it impetuous to enter the Was it impetuous to enter the Guild of Blacksmiths? At the moment, it appears that Bobbin's distaff is about to provide fuel to sharpen weapons for the Guild of Clerics' mysterious army.













In the years since the Guild of Weavers separated itself from the other guilds, Bishop Mandible has never ceased to envy its power to spin the fabric of reality.



When the boundary is breached, the Dead will stream back onto the plane of the Living, eager to reclaim their place among us!

find I will be waiting for them. Ready to offer my vast expertise in spiritual leadership.



Now that he has Bobbin, the bishop plans to open the graves of the dead and forma mighty army in allegiance to him. But what can you expect from the Transultimate Apostle of the Antisecular Conclave of Clerics?



When Chaos escapes through a tear in the pattern, Bobbin has no choice but to stop him. The fabric of reality is crumbling around him, but he is about to fulfill his destiny.



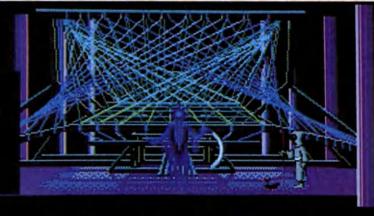
Outside the pattern, Bobbin at last meets his brave mother, Lady Cygna. She swims with the other elders on the Shore of Wonders.



Once a year, I managed to gain enough strength to pass inside for a few brief moments.

Those are the times that you saw me.

Any task Bobbin has left undone outside the pattern will be pointed out to him by Lady Cygna. The end of the game is near, so he must proceed with caution.



You will now instruct me in the use of this fascinating instrument.

Back at the loom where his destiny began, Bobbin must unweave the threads before the dead ones can take control. He must trust the loom. It knows all the drafts he needs.



When you call your broker, you get news of your net worth, financial holdings, and stock values as well as those of your rivals. Rankings are based on this information

Sid Meier's Railroad Tycoon

MATTHEW A. FIRME

increase the wealth of your railroad monopoly.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

The game casts you in the role of a hopeful entrepreneur with one million dollars in capital to invest in a new railroad. From

Carried (20,000)
State Majoracy (400,000)
Fron Our let (200,000)

Res 102,000

As you lay track across the expansive European continent, you must be prepared to build a few bridges.

there you're on your own, with only a map of the area in which you choose to play (Eastern U.S., Western U.S., England, or Europe), geographically accurate and ripe with resources. From these humble beginnings you must build your empire, battling competing railroads,



You get to watch your crew carry out your orders in one of the game's many animated sequences.



With the area display, you can keep an eye on how shipping is progressing at all of your stations at once. The blue shipping boxes show cargos available and cargos needed.

playing the stock market — even buying the competition, siphoning cash from it, and taking over its routes.

But first you must choose an area in which to lay your first track. If possible, select a location near two cities with large populations and plenty of industry and resources. You should lay track between the two, trying for the shortest route. Then you purchase a locomotive, choosing from the models available at whatever time in history you begin (the game covers over a century, from the 1820's through the 1960's, and the year in which you begin depends on whether you're playing in the U.S. or abroad). Next, you have to plan your train's route, ordering it, for example, to pick up coal and mail in Washington, D.C., and transport those goods to Richmond, where you would pick up loads of steel and wood and return to Washington.

Of course, things grow progressively more complex as time passes. Eventually new locomotives are invented, making faster transport of larger loads possible. You'll often find yourself running low on funds and having to raise some quick cash to complete a new track. Cities grow, increasing the demand for passenger and mail service, while resources may dwindle, industries close, or a flood destroy one of your bridges. These and other eventualities force you to



id Meier's Railroad Tycoon is a simulation of rarecomplexity. It re-creates the rise of railroading as it became perhaps the most powerful single industry

in the world. The game is thorough and constructs a world so complete and so involving that you'll probably have trouble turning off your computer.

Yet to its great credit, Railroad Tycoon never becomes bogged down by its considerable detail. Thanks to thoughtful program design and documentation that's entertaining andinformative, Microprose's Railroad Tycoon achieves an impressive level of reality without sacrificing playability.

Railroad Tycoon simulates nearly every aspect of the rail business: You must survey land to find the best route for a new line; studying the resources of an area, linking supply and demand. You compete with other railroads, racing to lay track into the growing cities in your area. You also have to foster new industries, carefully planning and positioning track to take advantage of a factory's goods.

Attracted by such industrial opportunity, settlers will flock toward the stations you build along your railroads. The markets they create for passenger and mail transport further

change your business strategy, rerouting trains, changing cargos, retiring some lines, and laying new track elsewhere.

Fortunately, the mechanics of the game can be mastered quickly. The interface designed for Railroad Tycoon (which uses the keyboard alone or both the keyboard and mouse) is simple and intuitive. You can access information on any specific train or station on your railroad by clicking on it, and the screen scrolls to follow your pointer as you move toward the edges of the main display.

This main display, an overhead map showing a chosen region and featuring the animated comings and goings of your trains, can be tailored to display nearly any infor-

mation you desire. At the beginning of the g a m e, y o u'r e shown the "regional display," a map of the entire play-

ing area. From this you can zoom in to the "area display" or the even more detailed 'local display."

Both emphasize railroad features over natural terrain, showing your tracks, stations, and the cargos waiting at those stations. There are also resource and surveyor maps of the area which you can toggle on and off. The resource map is a very valuable feature which summarizes supply and demand, highlighting areas with surplus goods or resources as well as the areas where those items are in demand. The surveyor map helps you avoid laying track uphill (which slows down your trains) or having to construct costly tunnels or bridges.

The "detail display," the



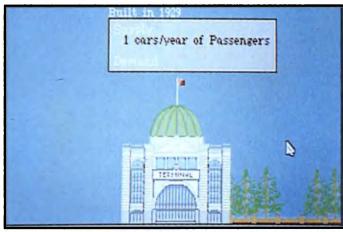
The detail display shows the land more accurately than the area display. Notice the double tracks around Regensburg; these allow more trains to serve the large city and reduce delays as trains move in and out.

one you'll probably use most often, is a tight, topographical view of the land, the closest view you can get. This display, which shows mountains, swamps, villages, ports, cattle ranches, and so on, is the one to use when deciding where to lay tracks. It also affords the clearest view of your tracks and trains, an important consideration if you need to alter a train's route or cargo quickly.

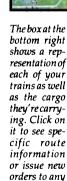
Railroad Tycoon supplements these main displays with many animated and still graphics, all very nicely executed. Whenever you build—a new station, a bridge, or a train—you see your orders being carried out. A new station is shown in closeup, com-

plete with newspaper headlines celebrating its opening. Bridges are built according to your specifications, and you get to watch the workmen hurriedly laying beams and track, bracing the structure, and finally leaving the completed project. And when you call for a new train, it is wheeled out of the engine shop for your inspection.

Other graphics appear automatically during play. Any "first" on your line — the first train to arrive in a new station, the inauguration of coal, food, or mail service — is celebrated with a view of the event and newspaper headlines proclaiming the joy of your customers. And at



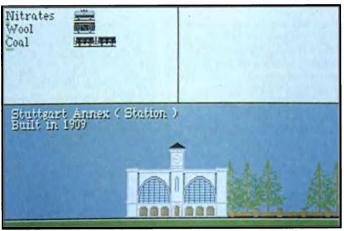
Here's the Terminal at Reims — one of the true architectural masterpieces of Europe. Terminals are the largest stations in the game, influencing a large portion of the surrounding countryside.



of the trains.

times, newspaper headlines flash over the main display. These give information on your competitors or the economic climate that may influence your current decisions and long-range plans. News that a rival has run new track into a city or area helps you stay alert to the competition, while word of growing labor violence may signal an economic recession, prompting a

Every two years of game time, the fiscal period ends and a series of displays assess your performance. These displays tell you how much your operating costs were, how much revenue your railroad took in, and what types of cargo earned the most money. You also sometimes receive messages about individual trains in need of attention, such as "Train #3 received no maintenance," or



Often you need to build a second station near a larger one to take advantage of all the available resources. This new station near Stuttgart quickly pays for itself by bringing in new revenues.

reassessment of your investments.

Should you want to look into your holdings, you can place a call to your broker, selecting the option from the pull-down "action" menu. This brings up the financial summaries display, giving you information on your stock holdings, those of your competitors (there can be up to three competing railroads), and the current value of all stocks. From this screen you can buy or sell treasury stock, stock in competing railroads, and sell or repay bonds. Of course, in keeping with your tycoon-sized ambition, you can only deal with stocks in blocks of 10,000 shares and only buy or sell bonds in \$500,000 increments.

"Train #1 produced no revenue." These items should be corrected as soon as possible. A train in need of maintenance has very high operating costs, and a train that's not producing revenue is nothing but money down the drain.

One of the most important components of the fiscal report is the ranking it assigns to you and your competitors. Based on the value of railroad stock and the company's net worth, the ranking can be influenced by many factors from a company's amount of ready cash to the number of outstanding bonds it has to the miles of track the line has laid. Next to each company is a picture of your fellow tycoon, its owner. They are all real figures, men like J.P.



You'll often make the headlines as you build your empire. The largest newspapers in the nation jump all over themselves to praise your accomplish-

Morgan, Cornelius Vanderbilt, and even Benito Mussolini. Beating men like these at their own game is an enormous pleasure.

There are three distinct economies at work in *Railroad Tycoon*. In the U.S., for example, grain is carried to food processing plants to be converted into food. In England, grain is the raw material of beer. And in Europe, grapes replace grain and are processed into wine. Similar regional distinctions affect livestock, steel, and so on. Even the closeups of stations reflect these differences,

adding real flavor to the game's locales.

MORE POWERFUL THAN A LOCOMOTIVE

With the enormous variety of transportation options available today, it's easy to forget just how powerful the railroads were during the eras covered in Railroad Tycoon. More than just rail-bound public transit, the railroads quite literally built countries. A town linked to the rest of a nation by rail could grow to a city. A series of such cities, connected by a strong rail system, could transform a territory into a state. Industries like steel, textiles, and manufacturing were dependent on rail service both for raw materials and distribution. These relationships made many railroad

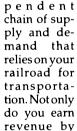


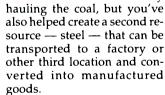
Over the course of the game, your influence on the cities you serve will be very apparent. Buffalo was only a village until the railroad came, bringing the people and industry that fueled its growth.

owners among the most powerful men in the country.

But before you can climb to the top of the industrial power structure, you must start a simple, profitable railroad. To do this, you must understand that it's not locomotives that drive a railroad; it's supply and demand.

Regardless of which of the three economies you deal with, your first task should be to scroll around the map, searching for an area with a good supply of raw materials. If you find an area rich in coal, for example, then it's important that you be near a resource that needs coal — such as a steel mill. By laying track between the two locations and running a train from one to the other, you're initiating an interde-





In this way you build your fortune. Beginning with that first load of coal, you must see to it that you not only earn a fee for the initial delivery, but that you deliver the cargo to a station capable of converting the coal as well. This insures that you have another opportunity to earn a fee, this time transporting steel; and again you can guarantee that the steel delivery leads to yet more revenue, this time hauling manufactured goods.

The key to success as a tycoon lies in developing an eye for such opportunities,



This hotel built in Youngstown, Ohio, helps to increase the revenue you earn from passenger trains.

then adjusting your rail construction and transit orders to take advantage of the situation. Ideally, no train on any route should travel empty. Each stop your train makes should earn revenue with the delivery of goods and allow that train to load up with other cargo, insuring further profit.

Different factors in Railroad Tycoon can override the importance of the "full load" rule. The most obvious of these is time, which logically affects many of your cargos. Each of the possible cargos is divided into one of five freight classes, and each class earns revenue based on the sensitivity of the cargo to speed of delivery and distance traveled. Mail is most sensitive to time and distance: therefore, it's best to move quickly from stop to stop with whatever mail is available at a station — even if you end up hauling only a potion of your capacity. If you wait for a full load, your cargo will become less and less valuable. No one wants yesterday's news, and, as the demand dwindles to near nothing, so do your profits.

On the other hand, bulk freights like coal and cotton are not at all time sensitive. Neither spoils with time, and both are as valuable to customers in the next town as in the next state. Therefore, you are paid a flat rate for delivery of these cargos regardless of

the time it takes to deliver them. So it makes sense to move bulk freights in as large a quantity as possible, even ordering your train to wait at the station for a full load.

It also pays to be aware of the differences in freight classes, carefully combining cars in a train's cargo. Knowing when to wait for goods and when to sprint ahead to the next station, or when to combine mail cars and coal cars goes a long way toward maximizing your railroad's profits.

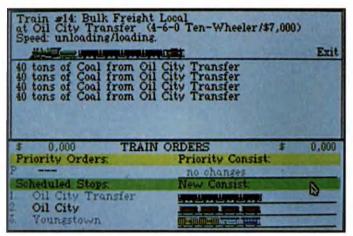
It is vital that you know the sphere of influence of each of the stations on your railroad. When you order each station to be built, a grid of rectangles appears over the construction box, the point on the map where you build. These represent the four types of stations you can build — signal tower, depot, station, and terminal — and the area around each that will contrib-



Every few years a new locomotive is invented. The new trains aren't always better than the older models; some offer increased speed at the cost of horsepower, and some horsepower at the expense of speed.



Don't forget about your stations once you've built them. It pays to make improvements — all of which can boost your revenue and net worth.



When ordering a new consist (the cargo your train is carrying), try to keep loads in the same freight class together.

ute cargo and purchase goods. An easy way to think of it is that the larger the facility, the farther people are willing to travel to bring goods to your railroad. Anything within the rectangle falls within the influence of that station.

You can seed your routes with opportunities to make even more profit by building along your route. In some cases, you might find yourself unable to process all the coal you can carry from a particularly rich mine. In this instance, it would be a wise investment to build a steel mill yourself, carefully placing it within the range of influence of one of your stations. This might necessitate expanding a station to a terminal, but it will pay great dividends in the future and add to the net worth of your railroad.

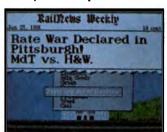
TIMID TYCOONS FINISH LAST

So many subtleties come into play as you strive to build your empire that it is simply impossible to touch on them all. Any option which doesn't violate the basic rules of the game is open, and the complexity of the economy, aggressiveness of the competition, and control of the trains themselves can be changed to suit your experience and competitive spirit.

However, one basic tenet of the tycoon mentality is always true: It pays to be aggressive.

As you carefully monitor your operation for ways to save and increase your revenues, remember that you are playing a game that can span over a century. Don't be afraid to spend — even to go deeply in debt — for long-term profit and growth. If your small operation in northern Ohio doesn't risk expansion into Michigan and Canada, you can bet that a competitor's trains will beat you there. And even when you are earning a satisfying living from your fivetrain railroad, don't hesitate to double your tracks and buy three more trains if there is cargo left waiting at a station. You'll better serve your customers, who in turn will expand their cities and bring you more business.

Be more than aggressive with your competitors. You



If you run track into a competitor's station, you initiate a rate war. Both you and your rival must slash fares and rush to service that town's needs.

should be ruthless, buying them out, stopping their growth, and taking their profits. Go ahead and run your line right into the station of a competing railroad. The resulting rate war makes both you and your rival cut rates in half and run every available train through the disputed station. The townfolk allow this for two fiscal periods, then they judge which railroad served them best and order the other out of town. Do whatever it takes to win — even buying new, powerful locomotives just to serve that town.

It will be worth it when you win; when the other guy is driven from the station he

built, leaving it (and the resources ources around it) to you. You then have a monopoly—and you can make those townsfolk pay double—your normal rates.

Unlike many simulators, which offer only a kind of "hands on the wheel" experience, Railroad Tycoon gives you a real and complete feel of control in a very complex situation. It gives you control as total as a real J.P. Morgan would have enjoyed, even approaching a Sim City- or Populous-like omnipotence. Yet it gives this depth of experience without becoming mired in its own scope. Railroad Tycoon is clearly one of the best simulations of any type — indeed, one of the best games in general — to appear in a very long time.



By diverting as many of your trains to Pitts-burgh as possible, you can out-perform your rival over the four-year period of a rate war. The railroad that best served the city gains exclusive rights to that station.

GP

Hardware requirements: 512K minimum memory (640K with VGA); VGA, MCGA, EGA, CGA, or Tandy 16-color graphics; mouse recommended.





The main menu in Red Baron offers a wealth of different ways to enjoy the simulation. If you like, you can jump right in and fly a mission without even reading the manual.

Red Baron



bomb the factory complex at Brighton — is up here...somewhere. But it's a bloody big sky, and you lost your wingman flying through that mass of clouds over Tunbridge Wells. Maybe you'll find him, maybe not. You crane your neck to see behind you and off to either side. Nothing but sky.

The engine on your little Sopwith Pup is straining as you fly in enormous circles to gain precious altitude, your ears keenly alert for any hint that your carburetor is starting to freeze up.

Suddenly, just as you're about to enter a great gray anvil of cloud, you look down. There she is! A vast black shape glides below you, like a shark of the sky, nosing into the clouds. You put the stick over, thankful that you took the time to get that extra 1000 feet of altitude — it means you can attack from above, the only angle which offers protection from the Zeppelin's multiple machine guns.

It's gone into the clouds now, but you can still see its sinister shadow as your plane follows into a grayed-out



For a real challenge, try a mano-amanoduel with one of history's famous aces. The Red Baron himself will probably take you out in about three minutes



If you become a famous German ace, you'll be able to customize your personal aircraft as France's Georges Guneymer did with his bright yellow



Always hold your fire until you're close — your machine guns are likely to score a solid hit only at close range.

world. The shadow now looms huge in the ring sight and you open fire, sending a swarm of incendiary bullets into the murk, knowing that if the Zep catches fire, it'll light up the sky like a second sunrise.

The sense of being alone in

a vast and dangerous sky, unable to talk to anyone by radio, relying on a handful of primitive instruments, flying aircraft equipped with weak engines and even weaker wings — all this comes through powerfully in **Dynamix**' breathtaking

World War I flying simulation, Red Baron.

Eschewing a quickly marketable "me-too" simulation, Dynamix has taken a lot of time and care with this product. The designers have, in fact, virtually rethought the whole concept of flight simulators and created a program that makes it easy for a novice to jump right in and start having fun. Yet Red Baron retains such remarkable depth in its several layers of options that even the most experienced joystick jockeys can find all the challenge they could ask for.

AS REAL AS YOU LIKE IT

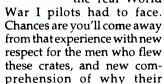
At the heart of Red Baron's gaming system is the "realism panel," where, before each mission starts, you can finetune the simulation precisely to the degree of difficulty commensurate with your skills. By starting off at the "novice" setting, you'll get aircraft that handle reliably and which fly without the sometimes-deadly quirks and idiosyncracies of their real-life counterparts. You'll also get on-screen grid references to make navigation simple, and a machine gun that never runs out of bullets. About the only thing bad that can happen to you is being shot down. Bad enough, true, but if you manage to land a damaged plane, you'll probably walk

away without serious injury.

As you fly on these beginner settings, you still get to practice the basic tactics and skills that you'll need in order to stay alive on the harder settings. Whenever you feel ready for it, you can go back to the realism panel and start adding features: realistic weather, for example (so that when you fly into a cloud, the whole screen goes gray), or guns that sometimes jam.

If you think you're up to

the challenge, you can opt for realistic flying characteristics, instrumentation, and mechanical reliability; then you'll be facing the same odds the real World



If you start your career early in the

war, you'll have to

take to the sky in

some pretty flimsy

aircraft, such as this D. H. 2. Of

course, the en-

emy's machines will be fairly

crude, too.

mortality rate was so high.

If you want to become an expert student of World War I aerial tactics, you should certainly read and study the manual chapter titled "Boelcke's Dicta." German ace Oswald Boelcke (40 victories; killed in October, 1916), though not as well-known as some of his comrades, was generally thought of as the fighter pilot's fighter pilot. He was perhaps



Tape any mission and play it back from any angle. You can also jump in and take control at any time during the playback.



For a deep, involving scenario, try flying a full career. Many pilots last only 3-5 missions (just as in real life), but the more you fly, the better you'll get.



After you've started your career, you can review a map of the front. Allied and Axis acrodromes are indicated by blue and red dots, respectively, and clicking on a dot brings up information for that airfield.

the keenest and most analytical student of tactics on either side, and his eight "dicta" encapsulate the essence of his experience: Keep the sun behind you, fire only at close range, always keep a line of retreat open, always meet a diving attack head-on, etc. Once, when he was asked to summarize his doctrines, Boelcke replied: "Well, it is quite simple. I fly close to my man, aim well, and then he falls down."

You can fly single missions, including balloon-busting missions that provide a lot of gratifying fireworks,

oryou can opt to enlist in either the Imperial German Air Service or the Royal Flying Corps for a whole tour of duty. Careers may be started early in the war, halfway through, or in 1918, when aircraft development and aerial tactics had reached a new level of sophistication.

In the career mode, you'll fly every sort of mission, including routine patrols during which absolutely nothing happens (the potential for boredom from this realistic touch is mitigated by the thoughtful inclusion of a "time compression" feature). If you

choose to start early in the war, you'll fly those missions in some pretty flimsy and underpowered aircraft. As time passes — assuming you survive — you'll be assigned new planes, transferred to new squadrons, and perhaps given a chance to custom-paint your personal aircraft, just as many of the real aces did (the German and French ones, at least; the R.F.C. frowned on the practice).

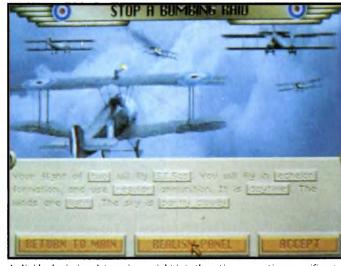
Another feature that many players will enjoy is the option to refly actual historical missions. These scenarios allow you to relive, vicariously, highlights in the careers of such great fliers as Max Immelmann, Frank Luke, and Ernst Udet.

HEAD-TO-HEAD WITH THE BARON HIMSELF

Perhaps the greatest challenges in *Red Baron* are the one-on-one dogfights you can have with the great aces. Want to challenge Baron von Richthofen to a duel? Want to see if you can outfox the young Hermann Goering? Want to see how long it takes the vain

but deadly Rene Fonck (who twice shot down six German planes in one day) to splatter you all over the French countryside?

All of the great sky knights of legend are here, awaiting your challenge to do battle, and each computer opponent has been programmed to fly and maneuver in the style of the historical character chosen. Your only chance against most of these guys is to study their tactics diligently, and use your



Individual missions let you jump right into the action or practice a specific set of flying skills for use in a career.



A single keystroke lets you observe your missions from a midair "chase plane" position, and also lets you fully enjoy this program's exceptional graphics.

Don't forget to check behind you periodically — that's where the enemy will try to come from during a dogfight.

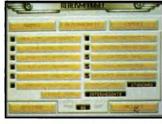
knowledge to try to anticipate their moves.

Also worth study is the section of line drawings that show the arcs of fire for most of the types of aircraft you'll be engaging, including balloons and Zeppelins. Each opponent has a blind, an angle from which you can attack with no threat of defensive fire. If you can get the sun at your back and position yourself at the correct angle, your chances of victory will increase significantly. Incidentally, if you have all the realism options on and you fly toward the sun, your monitor screen will suddenly flare dazzlingly an object lesson on why it is desirable to attack "out of the sun" whenever possible.

And watch your altitude!

Without time compression, it takes a long time to nurse an underpowered Fokker Eindecker back to dogfighting altitude. In just a few minutes of action, you can suddenly find yourself surrounded by exploding "archie" rounds, 500 feet above the trenches and a sitting duck for any enemy plane above you.

Graphically, Red Baron is a state-of-the-art product. At the touch of a key, you can move from your cockpit into a chase-plane position behind your aircraft for a thrilling cinematic view of the action. All missions can be recorded and played back later from any viewing angle you choose. Moreover, Dynamix has made it possible to stop the replay and jump back into the mission at any



The "realism panel" allows you to fine-tune the simulation, adding more authenticity as your expertise and confidence increase.



point, in order to try out any ideas that may have come to you as you watched the tape.

Players with sound boards (the game supports five different types of sound systems) are in for a treat. Engine noises, flak bursts, the gratifying metallic "whap" of your slugs hitting a target,

the alarming "spang!" of an enemy bullet shattering a wing strut — all add greatly to the realism. And the background music that heralds the game's opening credits

opening credit is appropriately stirring.

As the final touch to this magnificent simulation, Dynamix has provided a beautiful book of documentation (ring-bound, so that it folds back flat without damage), crammed with historical photos, tactical



You'll probably survive if you manage to land a heavily damaged plane, but a serious wound requires a stay in the hospital.

diagrams, and full-color plates of many of the aircraft encountered in the game.

In fact, every aspect of *Red Baron* shows a degree of care and imagination that sets a new standard for flight simulators. It's both "easy" and "hard," with all sorts of gradations inbetween. Even if you've never



Scratch one Gotha bomber! Explosion, tracer, and damage effects are very convincing in Red Baron.



You can run a dozen "careers" simultaneously, some on the German side, some on the Allied side. There are plenty of missions, so events rarely become predictable.

tried a flight simulator before, *Red Baron* makes it easy to start having fun right away. And if you're a veteran of conventional flight simulators, you'll find it quite challenging to put the realism settings on maximum and pit your skills against not only the enemy, but also against engines that freeze at high altitudes and wings that fall off during power dives.

It's hard to think of anything Dynamix could have done better in this product. *Red Baron*, the simulation, is as much an aristocrat as its namesake.

GP

Hardware Requirements: 640K minimum memory required; 256-color VGA only; hard disk and Joystick recommended; mouse optional; supports Roland MT-32, PS/1, LAPC-1, Ad Lib, and Sound Blaster sound boards.

The flight as-

signment screen

lets you view the particulars of

any single mis-

sion before it

starts, and gives

you the option of

customizing it.





A simple character-creation sequence begins each new adventure. Answer the shaman's questions and enjoy the nifty animation.

The Savage Empire

WILLIAM R. TROTTER



The jungles of Eodon can be dangerous. Here, a jaguar wreaks havoc on the outskirts of the Kurak village.

genres imaginative fiction was the "lost world" story. The basic gimmick was simple: Take a hero and a supporting party of people from a modern, technologically advanced culture; have them discover, or be transported to, an exotic or ancient civilization in some remote or hidden location; then put them through lots of breathless adventures. The most common yarn involved Stone Age tribes and dinosaurs that had somehow survived into the present, thanks to geographical isolation — and it became a venerable sub-genre in itself, one that ultimately produced a true cinematic masterpiece, the classic 1933

rom the mid-

19th century to the heyday of pulp magazines and B-grade movies in the 1930s, one of the most popular

Readers gobbled up tales filled with Aztec pyramids, furclad princesses, wildly colorful landscapes, and ferocious wildlife. And a lot of very good writers made a living supplying this demand, including Edgar Rice Burroughs (the Pellucidar series), A. Conan Doyle (*The Lost World*), and perhaps the best of the lot, a prolific Englishman named H. Rider Haggard (whose "lost race"

original version of King Kong.

novels *She* and *King Solomon's Mines* have been turned into movies, good and terrible, on numerous occasions).

In creating The Savage Empire, Origin's design team — Richard "Lord British" Garriott, Jeff Johannigman, Stephen Breeman, and Aaron Allston, who masterminded the complex and exceedingly vigorous story line — obviously steeped themselves in all the great "lost world" books and films. Obvious because, "by the crest of the great Thunder-Lizard," they got it all in — and they got it all right.

Wild and spectacular landscapes, fearsome beasts,

dusky and voluptuous maidens, primitive jungle tribes, decadent neo-Aztec civilizations, mutant cave-dwellers, iron-thewed warriors, lizardmen, giant apes, even a maniacal mad scientist from home — you name it, they put it into Savage Empire.

As the flagship offering in Origin's new Worlds of Ultima series, Savage Empire sets a high standard indeed. Having developed a role-playing interface of unexcelled friendliness and elegance for its hugely successful Ultima series of fantasy games, Origin has decided to apply that system to an entire series of spin-off games. These include



Character stats function just as they do in most FRP games, although their relative importance is not so great in Savage Empire. Methodical planning is more important than having lots of hit points.

role-playing adventures in many genres ranging freely over time, space, and history, all of which will be playable without reference to the original Ultima cycle.

The first one starts off with a bang. While Dr. Rafkin and the Avatar are examining a mysterious black moonstone (a thematic connection, however tenuous, to the original Ultima games will be a trademark of the spin-offs), a violent explosion blows them—along with a bright but obnoxious reporter named Jimmy Malone—into the Valley of Eodon. This valley is a lush but savage place where evolution has taken some very peculiar turns.

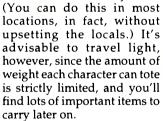
When the game begins, you wake up in the hut of Intanya, head shaman of the Stone Age Kurak tribe. All you can remember through your headache is a vision of a beautiful native princess named Aiela, who discovered



you just after the explosion that blew you into her world. You and she were getting along splendidly, when out of the darkness came her angry knuckle-dragging suitor, Darden the Huge, who pounded you into a coma and abducted Aiela — presumably taking her to the hidden city of his tribe, the Urali.

Intanya brings you to consciousness, heals you, lends you the services of his apprentice, a clever young shaman named Triolo, and

sends you forth with enough hints to get you started. You can arm yourself and pack a few days' rations just by helping yourself to the stuff that's lying around in the nearby huts.



Once you leave the Kurak village, you're pretty much on your own. The Valley of Eodon is a big, sophisticated, richly detailed game environment, filled with all sorts of marvelous things to see and do. There is no "right way" to proceed, and it's possible to have a terrific time just wandering wherever your whim takes you. It's also possible to die in a variety of messy and hideous ways, too, so never forget that Eodon has as many dangers as beauties.

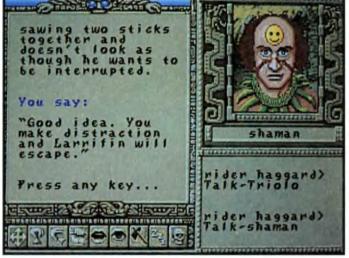
Sooner or later, though, most game players will want to do some serious, methodical questing. Origin makes it easy to get started by offering a help function in which all key words and names appear in red



Landscape graphics are marvelous in this game — the treatment of rivers and waterfalls is especially fine.



Your first task should be to assemble your party. Professor Rafkin can be found in the Yolaru village, due east of your starting point.



Most of the shamans you meet are good at healing. Not Larrifin, though — all he's good for is removing splinters.



When you encounter the brooding King Moctapotl, ask him about "exile" and about "uniting" the tribes.

whenever dialogue scrolls by. Veteran questbusters, or beginners who disdain such aid, can turn this off and do their own sleuthing, but less-experienced players will be grateful that the option is

available if needed.

The natives, though understandably cautious, are not normally hostile. Everyone you meet, except for the elusive and dangerous snake-women, will respond to such basic

Darkness falis quickly in the valley, and the jungle becomes even more deadly. Go into camp as soon as you can.

inquiries as "Name?," "Job?," and "Tribe?" Their replies are usually substantial enough to suggest a line of further questioning. It is through these conversations that you learn about the various quests and adventures on which you can embark.

Your initial quests are determined by your ambitions. You could start with one of the big strategic objectives, such as uniting the scattered tribes against the savage giant ants who prey on them, restoring a

deposed king to his rightful throne, finding Aiela in the hidden city of the Urali, and so on. Or you can gradually work up to these major objectives by undertaking



The village square of the Disquiqui is a good place to pick up both victuals and information...if you can find anyone sober enough to talk to.

some of the many smaller quests you learn about. These include some rather unusual tasks, such as organizing a parrot hunt, putting a bell on a pesky tyrannosaurus, or saving the princess Halisa from a giant white ape-thing that lives atop a supposedly inaccessible cliff.

GETTING ORGANIZED

However your personal adventures go, there are a few basic actions you should perform first. Once these are completed, you can start serious adventuring with an optimum chance of success.

First, locate those who were in the lab when it blew. Your first few conversations in the Kurak village should give you an idea of where to find Dr. Rafkin and Jimmy Malone. Once you've found the doc, ask him about his lab, his rifles, and his gunpowder.

On the way back from fetching Jimmy, detour to the grove of iron bamboo and cut down a few stalks for use as musket barrels. Hint: This



Iron-bamboo shafts can be used to fashion flintlock muskets. The bamboo is tougl to cut down, so use your sharpest implement and the Attack command.



The tar pits — complete with dead tiger — are south of the Kurak village. You'll need to visit them with a metal bucket if you want to make some grenades (hint: you do).

bamboo is so strong that you cannot cut it down by "using" a knife or a spear. Draw your



Looking for something and can't quite find it? Have Triolo go into his Eagle's Eye trance and you'll get an aerial view of about one square mile.

most powerful edged weapon and use the Attack command on the stalks.

Locate the lab. It's just where Rafkinsaysitis, but since that area consists mainly of trackless jungle, it's possible to miss the lab site even when you're close to it. If you get disoriented, have Triologo into his Eagle Eye trance and search the resulting topographic map for a large brown clearing.

Once you're back in the lab, uncrate the rifle and cartridges, manufacture the



bamboo flintlocks, whip up a big batch of gunpowder, and make some grenades out of clay pots — use hard, kilnfired pots if you can find them (most villages have a few lying around), or make your own out of river clay and fire them in an oven. With this kind of armament, you're ready to face anything Eodon can throw at

you — except maybe the tyrannosaurus, who simply can't be killed unless you manage to lure him to the edge of a very tall cliff.



venturing on any

major quests.

AN ECOLOGICAL

It's most important to find—
and thoroughly explore— Dr.
Rafkin's lab before

AN ECOLOGICAL
STEWPOT

In creating the self-composition of Eodon, or creators assimilated.

In creating the self-contained world of Eodon, Origin's creators assimilated a vast amount of anthropological, geological, and zoological research. The result is an entire ecosystem that really works. The tribes are all different from one another — some subtly, and some ludicrously. There are ten human tribes, or cultures, plus the strange and fascinating lizard-people, the Sakkhra. Eddying through this rich cultural and ecological stewpot are various social and political currents which you can tap into, bend to suit your needs, possibly control, and sometimes drown in. There are individual characters whose personalities range from sinister to outlandish, and the dialogue throughout the game is extremely clever and sometimes riotously funny.

And then there are the critters. Here, the designers have really outdone themselves, producing a menagerie of beautifully drawn and animated beasties. Some are



Mysterious teleport plates in the jungle? No one knows how they got there, but they're mighty handy for quick traveling, once you know where each one leads.



The Sakkhra — lizard-folk — have a fascinating culture. Origin' sattention to anthropological research makes the lost races of Eodon quite believable, not just the silly cliches they are in many games.

awesome and terrible (the tyrannosaurus is a real scene-stealer), and some are wonderfully whimsical. A good example of the latter is the dimetrodon, which looks exactly like one of those old lost-world movie dinos where the special effects guys took a pet lizard, glued a big plastic crest on its back, and filmed it in painfully slow motion.

Most of the dinosaurs will gladly eat you for lunch if they get the chance, but a good many of them are too ponderous or too dimwitted to catch you. If you see them



Some of the game's most gripping sequences take place in vast underground caverns, which are beautifully rendered.

in time, start going the other way — there's no point in wasting valuable arrows or irreplaceable bullets by killing everything you run into.

As for the graphics, Origin has pulled out all the stops to create a vibrant and beautiful imaginary world — nobody in the PC gaming arena, for instance, does rivers or jungles better than this.

On the strength of *Savage Empire*, the Worlds of Ultima series is off to a flying start.

GP

Hardware requirements: 640K minimum memory (expanded RAM needed for music), 10 MgHz or higher recommended; EGA, VGA, MCGA, and Tandy 16-color graphics; mouse and hard drive recommended; supports Ad Lib, Roland, and Sound Blaster.



Begin by selecting your samurai's name and clan. Symbols in the upper left denote the various resources found in each prov-

Sword of the Samurai Comes out Swinging!

WILLIAM R. TROTTER



ame players who enjoyed Koei's Nobunaga's Ambition will be familiar already with the historic milieu of MicroProse's new Sword of the

Samurai: Japan in the 16th century. A land fragmented into turbulent fiefdoms, a feudal system dominated by a powerful warrior caste — the samurai. The fierce code of honor and legendary feats of arms of the soldiers, diplomats, statesmen (even, on occasion, poets and philosophers) during this troubled time makes them all larger than life.

In Nobunaga's Ambition, Koei's game designers give equal weight to the political, economic, moral, and military aspects of leadership. By contrast, in Sword of the Samurai, MicroProse has concentrated on heroic role playing. And although plenty of diplomatic nuances are built in, they are more often than not personal rather than governmental in nature.

Sword of the Samurai treats one-on-one duels in a realistic manner, and often puts you into one of those wild one-managainst-a-hundred melees that werea trademark of all the great samurai movies.

Thankfully, the game doesn't stoop to the witless chop-socky that characterizes



As the youngest retainer, you start off with the lowest possible prestige.



Donating a parcel of land to the local Buddhist temple is a good way to impress the hatamoto early in the game.



You can check status screens at any time to see how your rivals within your clan are faring.



Even on casual journeys, you'll meet plenty of troublemakers. There is only one honorable thing you can do in this situation — draw steel.

strategist.
You begin by selecting a clan to belong to and a hatamoto (baron) to serve. There are several other samurai in similar service, and each has his own personal agenda for self-advancement. Friendships are possible, but treachery is more likely. In the early stages

of the game, you must concen-

a host of mediocre martial arts

games. Indeed, if you wish to

succeed in Sword of the Samu-

rai, you must not only become

a master swordsman, but also

a thoughtful and seasoned

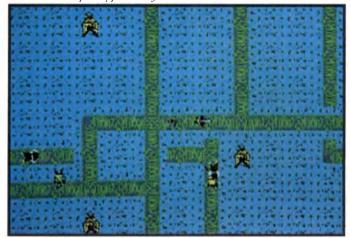
trate on winning the hatamoto's favor through acts of loyalty, honor, and courage.

If you become sufficiently prominent and respected, the daimyo (duke) may promote you to the rank of hatamoto when the current baron dies. If you distinguish yourself in that position, the supreme warlord, the shogun, may in turn raise you to the rank of daimyo when that post becomes vacant.

CLIMBING THE LADDER OF SUCCESS

If you're a daimyo, the game opens up a whole new realm of possibilities. You then command not just a band of retainers, but also a powerful army comprised of archers, cavalry, and musketeers in addition to the dogged footsoldiers with whom you started. The inevitable temptation arises: Someone has to be

If you're attacked in the rice paddies, stand where the paths intersect so you'll have the clearest field of fire with your bow.







The dead spaces of game play while the computer loads the next scenes are enlivened by amusing homilies another nice touch.

the shogun, the supreme generalissimo - why not you?

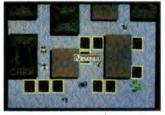
As you ascend in rank and power, the game provides a delectable smorgasbord of incidents, encounters, campaigns, and miniature quests. For example, perhaps a band of drunken ronin insults you at a tavern. Honor demands that you slay them — all 16 of them

> (and watch out for the guys with spears!). Or your betrothed is kidnapped, and you must infiltrate an enemy's castle to rescue her. Or perhaps the daimyo sends you to retrieve a priceless

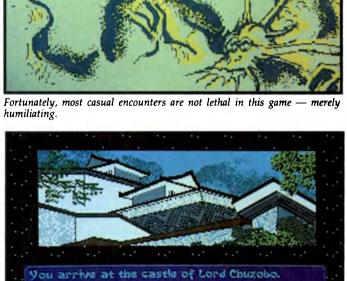
scroll from some brigands.

Maybe a spy informs you that a rival samurai has dispatched a hit squad of ninjas to fillet you in bed. And if a truly great dishonor comes to you (Don't kid yourself. At some point in the game, you'll be tempted to do something that falls under that category), you may be compelled to obey the shogun's edict and commit sepukku — ritual suicide.

Nearly every time you

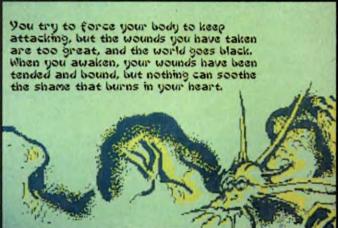


When brawling in a village, remember that crossing walls, bushes, and gardens slows you down. The same obstacles also slow down your assailants.



You stop in a village for a cup of sake, but your refreshment is disturbed by a group of drunken ronin who make insolent remarks about your appearance. You decide to * Avoid trouble and go on about your business. * Oraw your sword in the defense of honor. Make choice, Press Selector

Even stopping for a casual cup of sake can be dangerous to your health. Again, honor demands that you thrash these dogs mercilessly.

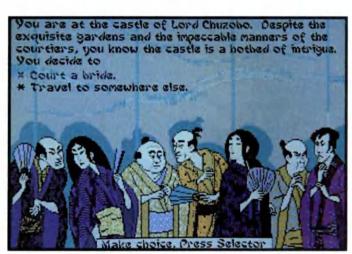


You'll make numerous

sleep.

Travel to somewhere else

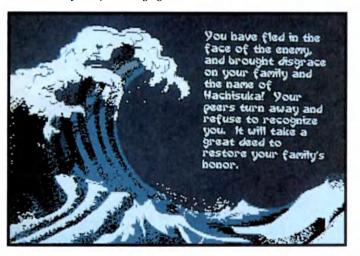
Enter boldly.



Various opportunities await you in court. As a virile, unattached young fellow, you may wish to seek a comely wife — if one will have you.



If your courtship is successful, you may soon acquire an heir. And very useful he'll be, too, should you require avenging.





Journeys are depicted on this type of map. Your animated samurai travels much more slowly while crossing rivers or mountains than when walking on the plains.

venture into the countryside, you encounter brigands and renegades. Sometimes these meetings take the form of one-on-one duels, and sometimes they are free-for-all melees. Before each battle begins, you are given the option of ignoring the challenge and continuing on about your own business, or drawing your sword and getting right down to it.

Given this game's strong emphasis on personal honor, your first instinct will probably be to take on all comers each time you're challenged. And to be sure, as long

as you win more encounters than you lose, such single-minded bellicosity slowly but surely increases your stature—though it slows down the game considerably as well.

But, on the other hand, you'll rise much faster if you and your troops are the first contingent to arrive at the hatamoto's castle when he sends out a request for aid. If you delay your response just so you can thrash a band of common



When you're in court, hunt for good deeds waiting to be done. You know, priests to be rescued, that sort of thing. The lord certainly would notice honorable acts performed right under his nose.

If you should run away from a fight, or even accidentally exit the battle screen, great will be your dishonor.





Even the incidental plot details in Sword of the Samurai are rendered with exquisite sensitivity to color and mood.

ruffians, some other samurai is sure to beat you to the palace and hog all the glory.

Sometimes, therefore, it's



A disgraced samurai has great difficulty recruiting additional troops.

best to swallow your pride and press on, ignoring the casual affronts of louts and cut-purses. Besides, you can always come back and eviscerate them after you've taken care of the baron's business.

One serious bug in the melee scenes was noted in the early shipments of this game. After you become *hatamoto*, you still have to fight melees in villages and rice paddies. In these early shipments, some-

thing happened in the rice paddy scenes that caused the program to crash, replacing the lovely graphics with a set of meaningless, flickering vertical bars. If this happens, call MicroProse, and they will ship you a supplementary disk that



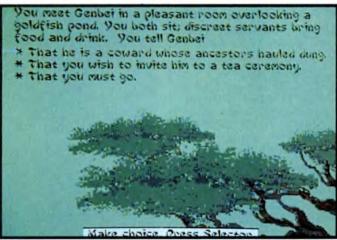
Fear not: New opportunities for glory and honor will soon manifest themselves.

corrects the problem. The bug will be corrected in later shipments.

READY FOR THE BATTLE SCENE, MR. DEMILLE

In big-scale battles, Sword of the Samurai makes literal what Nobunaga's Ambition made abstract and chess-like, but it does so with no less elegance. Armies are viewed from above, deployed on realistic and handsomely rendered terrain. The system of command and control is very easy and logical to grasp, but it can be as subtle as all get-out in practice, and sometimes just as vulnerable to bad luck.

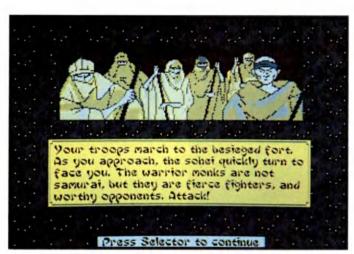
After a battle begins, army



Once back in court, you may find it prudent to do a little politicking. The first of these options is not recommended under ordinary circumstances.



As you embark on your campaign, good news arrives by messenger.



Rebels come in all varieties. Here's a chance to redeem your honor with an easy victory.

formations are controlled by a small icon shaped like a traditional Japanese war fan. Move your unit by positioning the fan over its destination, click



Of course, some people just don't like tea ceremonies. Next time, you may as well insult him.

to determine whether the unit will march without turning, or turn while marching, then watch what happens. It's a quick, intuitive system, realistically modified by terrain, foliage, and the effects of enemy fire.

You can initiate battle with several basic attack or defense formations. Each has a picturesque and descriptive name ("The Crane's Wing," "The Arrowhead," and so on). You must select the appropriate formation based on the terrain and your reading of the enemy general's intentions.

All the battle scenes —

most especially the castle, village, and rice paddy melees — have the look and texture of those classic swashbuckling fights staged by Akira Kurosawa in his samurai films. That is to say they are some of the most vivid and viscerally exciting scenes to be found in any role-playing game.

For all its epic dimensions, Sword of the Samurai is miraculously easy to get into. You can dive right into any of the practice scenarios without reading one page of the manual and instantly have a great time just by doing what comes instinctively. Only via the long roleplaying scenarios, however, can you fully savor the depth and richness of the game.

As icing on the cake, MicroProse has lavished on this game some of the most breathtaking graphics ever to grace a PC game. Virtually every screen boasts an elegant composition in the style of the great Japanese woodblock artists, with imaginative, subtle colors. You'll find yourself pausing, time after time, just to savor the artistry that decorates this exceptional game.

GP





When a fellow samurai is in trouble, you may go to his aid or not, depending on the circumstances. Some honor may be lost, however, by an outright snub.

Swordfighting with the joystick is smooth and instinctive. Try a side-cut if you see an opening.





Spectacular and elaborate dogfight scenes are the most dramatic feature of Wing Commander, but its quieter virtues are impressive as well.



n March 15 in the year A.D. 2629, the Terran exploration vessel *la*son, engaged on a routine survey mission in the Vega Sector, encountered a

spaceship of unknown origin. The *lason's* skipper beamed a standard signal of greeting and non-belligerence, then waited for a response from the alien. After 20 minutes, the reply came — a blast of firepower that vaporized the Earth ship and her entire crew.

That was humankind's first encounter with the aggressive and pitiless Kilrathi, a warrior race that resembles giant tabby cats, refers to humans as "monkeys," and has an insatiable appetite for interstellar conquest.

Now, 25 years later, the war is stalemated, with both sides waging a costly all-out campaign to wrest control of the Vega Sector. The manpower and resources of the Terran Confederation have become stretched almost to the breaking point. If the Vegan campaign is lost, the Kilrathi will roll forward with renewed vigor and the fate of humanity itself may hang in the balance.

This is where you, the game player who has just booted up **Origin's** spectacular *Wing Commander*, come in. You're a young rookie pilot

Wing Commander

WILLIAM R. TROTTER



Like a cinematic experience, Wing Commander lets you see the action from multiple points of view.



Here's the Skipper. He's tough but fair, caustic but lovable, and you've met him before in a hundred war movies.

assigned to the *Tiger's Claw*, a 7,000-meter-long *Bengal*-class strike carrier with a complement of 104 fighters. You hardly have time to meet your squadron mates before you're sent out on your first mission.

Your first few missions are flown in a Hornet light fighter — fast, maneuverable, but somewhat lacking in punch. You'll learn that, until you develop your own flying style, and the controls of the Terran ships become an extension of your own hands, brain, and will, you'd be wise to fly by "The Book." You'll also learn that the Kilrathi are skilled, fanatically brave adversaries who outnumber the Terran pilots by about three to one.

If you survive your first few missions, and rack up a respectable number of kills, you'll be transferred out of Hornets and into a Scimitarclass medium fighter. It's at this point that the missions become really difficult, as you are sent into Kilrathi formations whose ships not only outnumber your party but are also more powerful than your own ship. You'll also be sent after strategic targets — transports full of munitions and reinforcements, always guarded by swarms of escorts. You'll wish, over and over again, for a faster, better-armed ship, but until you prove yourself in the Scimitar—a "fighter designed by a committee" in which all the factors of firepower, speed, and armor are dictated by



The scramble sequence is very dramatic. Live all the animated n a r r a t i v e scenes, however, you have the option of skipping it once you've seen it enough.

compromise
— you won't
be able to advance to a better class of
ship.

The mid-level missions in Wing Commander are a "branching" program — i.e., the results of certain critical missions dictate the path the game scenario will take in subsequent missions. It's possible to play and save, play and save, and just bash your way through to ultimate victory by sheer persistence, but if you do, you'll miss some of the dramatic and creative high points of the game.

If, for example, the campaign starts to go badly, you'll actually see the interior of the Tiger's Claw grow lonelier and dingier. Kilrathi raids get closer. Cut-away vignettes show bloody Kilrathi victories at various Terran bases in the Vega Sector. And eventually you'll have to scramble to repel a massive attack on the Claw herself. If the worst happens, you'll see a horrific sight your ship being blown to pieces by a horde of taunting "furballs," leaving you and your surviving mates to drift helplessly in space until the oxygen runs out.

ANGST INCLUDED

If Wing Commander were only a dogfighting game, a kind of super-arcade extravaganza, it would still be one of the most gripping computer simulations ever released — but it's a lot more than that, for the heart-stopping combat sequences are embedded in a solid role-playing context. You get to know the other pilots (several of the deadliest ones are female, be it noted to Origin's credit), each of whom has a personal style of flying and each of whom



In between missions, relax in the pilots' bar, where you can try new tactics in the training simulator or chat with Shotglass, the ever-empathetic bartender.



You'll go out first in a Hornet. Not heavily armed, but fast and nimble, the Hornet will get you into range and out of trouble very quickly.



On escort missions, you'll have to hang around in dangerous areas until the transport you're escorting jumps into hyperspace. You'll know the instant that happens.



Few missions are scarier than a dogfight in an asteroid field, where you have to worry about the rocks as well as the enemy.





Although
Wing Commander will
doubtless find
its biggest audience among
males, it is not
asexist game—
some of your
best "wingmen" are females.

can give you some pointers. You even get to know the enemy, since you will

occasionally encounter Kilrathi aces whose flying styles and personalities are part of the whole gestalt.

Especially poignant is the moment when you finally shoot down a worthy foe such as Bahktosh Redclaw. As your neutron cannon rounds rip pieces from his engines, he cries out over the open radio channel, "You shall not put me in that vacuum!" And then with your final burst causing his vessel to erupt into a boiling cloud of plasma, you hear him scream: "Aiee! The Void! The Voi...."



One of the more common enemy craft is the saucer-shaped "Dralthi" fighter. It's a big target, and it's vulnerable too...unless it's coming at you head-

Fail in a mission, and you'll get chewed out by the C.O. Lose a wingman, and you'll have the sad experience of viewing his or her funeral in space — Wing Commander is filled with dramatic animated sequences that give it genuine role-playing depth. You even get to witness your own death (from two angles, no less) and funeral.

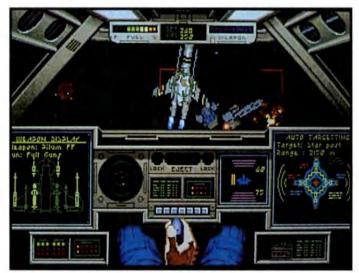
Not all of your colleagues will be totally reliable or safe to fly with — another realistic touch. One in particular, a hotblooded young buck nicknamed Maniac, will disobey orders sometimes just to rack up more kills for his personal glory, and thereby jeopardize the mission. He may even shoot you down if you get in his way while he's diving at

the enemy. Although your first instinct may be to go to the aid of your wingman whenever he or she calls for help, you may get so fed up with Maniac that you just leave him to get himself out of trouble, while you continue on with the mission. Just as in real life, it's your call, and the variables in the program make some of the choices pretty tough.

In contrast to Maniac, there are pilots who are so steady and reliable that you want to keep flying with them throughout the whole game. And when one of them gets blown into kitty litter, you may feel a surprising pang of loss — quite a tribute to the role-playing gestalt of Wing Commander.

INTERACTIVE CINEMA

Wing Commander shamelessly—indeed, gleefully—borrows many of its design elements and much of its imagery from Star Wars and a host of lesser space operas. And goodness only knows how many thousands of feet of real dogfight



The heavier classes of Kilrathi fighters are very tough to bring down. Fortunately, you rarely meet them until you've graduated to one of the better-armed Confederation ships.



When flying escort, stay close to your big ship and don't let the enemy bait you into a long-range pursuit. Once the transport has "jumped," you'll be free to engage at will.



Keep track of your ranking within the squadron by checking in periodically with the pilots' scoreboard.

footage designer Chris Roberts must have viewed when planning the combat missions. The cinematic

look of the film is fully complemented by a thundering musical score. According to Origin, one of the design goals of the program was to create the closest possible analog to a big-screen movie experience, with the player as the star. This is a goal many simulations aspire to — and none comes closer to being a true interactive movie than Wing Commander.

When searching for adjectives to describe the graphics, this reviewer must fall back on a word that is overused and seldom truly deserved: awesome. The illusion of flying through a three-dimensional void is at times quite spooky (try cutting off the lights while you play) — nebulae twist in cold blue vortexes, suns flame against a velvet, star-dusted night, and asteroids loom in front of your ship like wrecking balls hanging in space.

Missiles, laser blasts, damage effects, explosions — all of these are handled with



One mistake, one hesitation, one too many bursts on the afterburner, and your pilot buys the hydroponic farm. You also get to see yourself die from an outside point of view, if you're curious.

uncanny — at times almost unnerving — realism. The dogfight programming sets a new standard — not only does your own ship maneuver and shoot in an utterly convincing manner, but both allied and enemy ships under computer control behave with an aston-

ishing degree of seeming intelligence. You'll have to become one hot pilot to survive most of these missions, able to hit a target even while zigzagging and spinning wildly, able to know just when and how long to use your afterburners and when to break off action to let your weapons recharge.

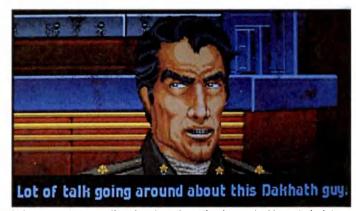
Players who have become frustrated with high-tech flight simulators - in which you spend most of your concentration just keeping the plane in the air and on course - need have no fear. These space fighters are about as easy to fly as a World War I Spad: a joystick, a gun sight, a fuel gauge, a weapon-selector switch, and that's about it. The computer even takes care of navigating, take-offs, and landings. You're free to fly and fight. Learning how to survive, much less emerge from some of these bloodbaths with your skin intact, is a much tougher proposition.

Some of the melee scenes, in which six, eight, or even more spacecraft are twisting, firing, exploding, and rolling, are simply breathtaking. Origin provides several function-keys that allow you to view the action from different angles — and an updated edition of the game, due out in early 1991, will even have a "tape" option that will let you record your most satisfying victories and play them back.

Despite the size and epic scale of the program, Wing Commander is gratifyingly easy to play. The basic commands and functions are quite small in number, as are the moves and tactics necessary to fly your space fighter. Origin's documentation — presented in the form of the Tiger's Claw's



If the campaign begins to go badly, narrative screens will appear to illustrate the strategic consequences of the battles you've been losing.



In between missions, talk to the other pilots. They have valuable tactical advice to give, including tips that could save your life.





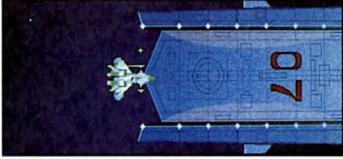
Be extra careful during the big, swirling melees — you'll really feel bad if you shoot down one of your comrades (and worse, if one of them shoots you down).

own daily newspaper, "Claw Marks" — is as well-designed as every other element of this precedent-shattering game. There are valuable discussions of tactics, weapons, and personnel, along with the basic instructions.

One small quibble emerges from the tactical discussion: "The Book" recommends using "Sit-n-Spin" or "Sit-n-Kick" maneuvers in which you must suddenly shut off your engines and let the enemy shoot past you and into your waiting gun sights. Fine in theory, perhaps (these tactics were used with great success by British Harrier pilots during the Falklands War, in fact), except for one small problem: The program provides no keystroke that will let you shut off your engines suddenly. All you can do is decelerate over a period of several seconds. And every time we tried it, we were turned into cat food by the enemy. Perhaps this feature will be added to subsequent editions.

Readers should note that Wing Commander was designed to take maximum advantage of the fastest and most powerful home computers. To get the most from the 3-D graphics, sound, and stunningly good animation, you really do need VGA, a sound board, and the best joystick you can find. Ideally, you should also have a 386/16 computer too, but if you don't mind a certain amount of jerkiness in the more complicated melee battles, a 286/12 will do fine.

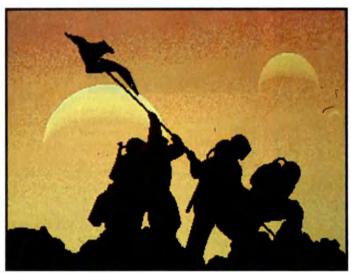
Wing Commander uses as much free RAM as possible on



Don't worry about landings — no matter how badly shot up you may be, the computer will bring you home. Just navigate to one end of the carrier and request landing clearance.



The amount of damage you sustained on each mission can be seen in the hangar sequence that concludes a mission. Your mechanic may also say a few choice words — he's great at stating the obvious.



If the Confederation wins the Vega campaign, the game's finale is a stirring victory sequence. Do these space Marines look familiar?

the player's system. Any memory-resident programs will compromise the action, and regardless of the amount of memory on your machine, you must have at least 550K free in order to run the simulation.

Origin has created the finest dogfight simulator ever developed, no matter what genre. Wedded to the white-knuckled combat scenes is a

role-playing framework of glorious, Walter Mitty melodrama and surprising depth. The whole concept is carried out by means of stunning graphics and animation. It is, in short, a virtuoso, drop-dead sensation, and the closest thing yet to a genuine interactive movie for your PC.

GP

mouse; supports 256-color VGA/MCGA, EGA, and Tandy graphics; supports Roland, Ad Lib, and Sound

Blaster.

Hardware requirements:

Dual floppies or hard drive;

640K minimum memory; 12

MHz or faster: joystick or

SUPER STRATEGY

BATTLES OF

WILLIAM R. TROTTER

It has taken nearly a year for SSI's award-winning Battles of Napoleon to appear in PC format, leaving personal computer users interested in simulations of smoothbore-era warfare restlessly reading the glowing reviews and accolades this program got in its other incarnations.

But the wait is over, and it was worth it. Battles offers a lot to any war gamer interested in Napoleonic simulations. Not only does it include richly detailed scenarios for Borodino,

Auerstadt, Quatre Bras, and Waterloo, but also a powerful and meticulously thought-out construction program that lets you create maps and

ate maps and armies to wage imaginary campaigns (or to tinker with real history, whichever turns you on the

The program also lets you generate random engagements without having to go through the construction set. Once you've replayed Waterloo from every angle you can think of, this random option keeps things fresh, game after game.

Even if the saber-andmusket game field were more crowded, SSI's system for reproducing that era's tactics would still be outstanding. Everything that could possibly influence a Napoleonic battle seems to have been factored in: terrain, unit formations, cumulative fatigue, morale, efficiency, leadership, and angles and ranges of fire.

There is a finely honed balance between the complexity necessary to simulate and the playability needed to make the simulation enjoyable. It is largely due to its effective balance that Battles really wins its marshal's baton. The gaming system is less tedious than that of Universal Military Simulator (and the artillery casualty figures are much more realistic!), and dramatically easier to use than the somewhat creaky "Battlefront" system.

You can't expect Battles of Napoleon to yield either its secrets or its multifaceted rewards without some work on your part. The documentation is dense and somewhat opaque (when will game companies realize that clear instructions are as important as good programming?). The manual could also use some visuals so that the beginner can make sure that what he sees on his screen is what he's supposed to see.

Yet, as daunting as the



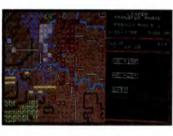
Maneuver and combat take place on large-scale sector maps, but you can hit the "other map" key at any time to see how this closeup relates to the battlefield as a whole

documentation may be on a quick read-through, most of the game system's commands and options make excellent sense as you actually struggle through your first scenario. Don't, however, expect to win those first few battles - the computer knows how to handle cavalry charges and command control procedures from the start, whereas most human players need to hack through several battles (with frequent references to the manual) before they get the hang of these things.

Perhaps the subtlest aspect of the program is that of "command control." In the years before electronics, when orders had to be delivered by hand or bellowed over the din of musketry, the physical proximity



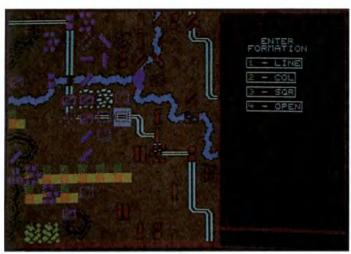
Battles's command menus give you outstanding flexibility and realism. It may take several games, however, to learn how to get the most from your cavalry.



most).

The "transfer leader" screen shows you where each unit of a corps or division is located on the field. Unit integrity is vital, as is the physical proximity of regimental and divisional commanders.

NAPOLEON



Movement and firepower effectiveness depend on your formations and facing. At the least suspicion of an enemy cavalry charge, form the threatened infantry into squares.

The "command control" screens show you how each officer is rated. Four asterisks mean he is near perfect, while one asterisk means he may be more valuable to the enemy than to you.

BATTLE	S 0	F	N A	P	0	L	E	0	N
3-21-1805 9:0	0 AM	S	COR	E:	2	193	3		
GAME TURN: 4	LAST	GAM	E T	UR	1:	10	9		
MEN:	FRENCH				ALLIED				
KILLED	2098				1566				
HOUNDED	2624				1959				
MISSING	1574					1174			
CAPTURED		280						59	9
TOTAL	6576				4758				
# LEFT	57406					57463			
FORCE LEFT		89%					9	92:	1.
Pross SPACE to	CONT	NUE							

At the end of each turn, the casualty figures are displayed for infantry, cavalry, and artillery.

of a commander to his troops
— and the charisma and confidence that radiated from him
— could make all the difference between a victory and a rout.

In Battles, each leader has his own rating, which in turn affects everything from melee strength to the speed with which orders are carried out and ammunition supplied. Before the movement and combat portions of each game turn, you have a chance to move leaders from stabilized spots to the places where they'll do the most good.

While battles can be won or lost by what you do or fail to do at this stage, the documentation is particularly muddy as to what exactly you must do in order to maximize "command control" within this particular game system. In general, you should try to keep your division commanders with their most hotly engaged regiments, and regiments grouped together within divisions. Beyond that, you just have to develop a feel for things as you play.

If you don't have EGA graphics, but you do have a color monitor, you may want to experiment with playing the game in shaded monochrome. The colors used in CGA mode are positively bilious. Not that the utilitarian EGA graphics are anything to invite your friends over to see, either, but at least they won't give you a migraine.

But any flaws in Battles of Napoleon fall by the wayside when you play this elegant and sophisticated system. The battles are utterly engrossing and appropriately bloody. Most of all, the simulation of Napoleonic tactics leaves nothing to be desired. Battles is a thoroughbred.

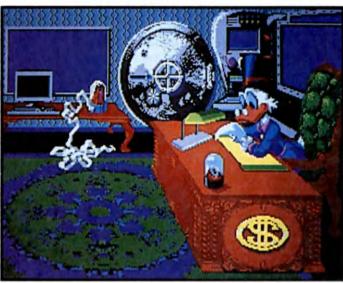


Hardware requirements: 512K minimum memory; EGA or CGA graphics.

DUCKTALES

STEVE HUDSON

Now and then a game comes along that seems to have it all. It's got good graphics and appealing sound. It's challenging but not frustrating, educational but not pedantic, and entertaining but not frivolous. Such a game is DuckTales: The Quest for Gold, a debut package from Disney Software. While DuckTales isn't perfect, it's awfully close.



Scrooge McDuck operates out of this office. Note the safe door on the back wall—it opens to reveal three cubic acres of cash!

DuckTales even has a plausible story line, at least if you're a duck with a penchant for adventure. There's this character named Scrooge McDuck, who's really a pretty decent chap. He's rich but not crooked, a world-class adventurer, and a crafty businessduck, too. He is, he'll tell you, "tougher than the toughies and smarter than the smarties." But he's also oh-sohonest, and he's been Dime Magazine's Duck of the Year for 20 years straight.

Scrooge's best buddies seem to be the Woodchucks, three young ducklings with the familiar names of Huey, Dewey, and Louie, and a fourth Woodchuckette named Webby.



Ifyou're going to beat Flintheart, you'd better make wise investments in companies like Gull Oil and Lake Doughbegone.

Scrooge is also on great terms withinvestment advisor Fenton Crackshell and dashing aviator Launchpad McQuack—not to mention science advisor

Gyro Gearloose, who has dedicated his life to finding complex solutions to simple problems.

Into this happy little world comes Flintheart Glomgold, a duck that's every thing Scrooge is not. Flintheart is mean-spirited, crooked, and dishonest, and he's got the Beagle Boys on his side.

What brings all the characters together is Dime Magazine's highly coveted Duck of the Year award. Flintheart has announced that he's getting the honor this time around, but Dime has decided it goes to the duck that finds the most money in the next 30 days.

Game play starts in Scrooge's office, where you (as Mr. S) are sitting behind your desk. On a nearby wall is the vaultlike entrance to the money pit, a tremendous safe where you store three cubic acres of cash. Sometimes you go swimming in the money just for fun, and there's even a diving board to launch you in fine style. Sometimes you come up with a



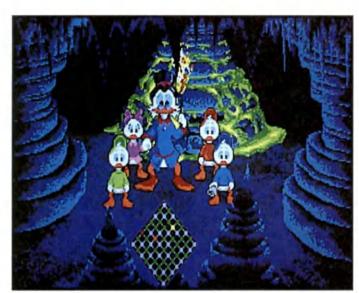
Scrooge and company start their trips by selecting a destination from this map, highlighting a particular treasure with a crosshair cursor.

mouthful of gold. Other times, you pull out a rare and valuable coin — working capital! And you need working capital you won't get onto Dime's cover just by saving. You've got to make wise investments in the stock market, too. The secret is simple — buy low, sell high - and there's a stock market ticker sitting nearby to tell you how your investments are doing. Several stocks are available. Which you buy depends on the day (shown on the handy on-screen calendar) and the latest tips (revealed in the business news). The manual includes charts that describe the performance of the stocks, and your job is to use them to decide what and when to buy and

But the real adventure is not in the office. It's out in the Wide World, where adventure waits as you track down beaucoups of priceless treasures. Along with sidekicks Huey, Dewey, Louie, and Webby, you choose various treasure sites from a detailed



Some adventures take our feathered friends onto mountains that are honeycombed with caves. Strange things live in some of the caves, and the Beagle Boys lay in wait with deadly anvils, too.



Some of the richest treasures can be found in caves. Just watch out for mummies and slime pits.

on-screen map. Then you set off to find them — and getting there is half the fun.

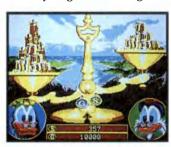
There are two ways to travel. One is to climb into Gyro's matter transmitter. It's high-tech, to be sure, but you've got to find some rare bombastium before it'll play. Even then, it's a roll of the dice. The second way to travel is to hitch a ride in Launchpad's airplane, a truly hair-raising experience. You control the plane's flight yourself, and an unusual flight it is, too. Suffice it to say that the plane's response is unique. You've also got hazards like clouds, which can send you off in unexpected directions or even turn you upside down. There's the Altitude Ceiling, which you don't want to bump. And you may have Flintheart racing you to your destination.

Back on land, you'll find yourself in places like Swansylvania, Trala La, Too-Pei, and the Okeefadokie Swamp. Once there, your journey may take you through thick jungle, up steep mountains, or deep into mummy-infested caves. You'll have to navigate treacherous routes while

avoiding rolling rocks, coconutthrowing monkeys, and the Beagle Boys' falling anvils. If you're stopped in your quest by, say, a rock or an anvil, then one of your buddies has to leave your merry band, presumably for a trip to the infirmary. A quest for that particular treasure continues until all four buddies are out of the game.

If Scrooge has been playing smartly, he's been stashing his treasure at the Scales of Macaroon, a giant balance designed to weigh great sums of money. If he outweighs Flintheart, he makes the cover of Dime.

If you get the feeling that



The Scales of Macaroon, one of the duckmade wonders of the world, is a giant balance designed for weighing huge quantities of wealth — and deciding whether Flintheart or Scrooge graces the cover of Dime Magazine.

DuckTales has a lot going for it, you're right. Its arcade-style action makes it an enjoyable wrist-bender, and the mental challenge offered by the stock market keeps the gray matter in shape, too. My seven-year-old had never encountered X-Y graphs before, but after an hour or so she was making "Buy!" and "Sell!" calls with the best of them. Is there some subtle learning going on here? Could be

DuckTales' graphics are exceptional throughout, no surprise for any Disney product, and the sound is good, even on my PC's tinny speaker. Sound promises to be much better for those who purchase Disney's Sound Source, a lowcost amplifier/speaker that plugs into your PC's printer port. The Sound Source brings digitized speech, orchestrated music, and sound effects to PCs running DuckTales and other Disney titles. It was not available for this review.

One minor quibble with the game — before you can get out of Scrooge's office, you must decipher a secret code. Based on a set of hieroglyphics, the code is unraveled using one of those infuriating key sheets printed on deep red paper. This, I suppose, is the middle ground of copy protection, and the hidden-code idea fits the game. But the paper is so dark that the type is exceedingly hard to read and if your dog, cat, or toddler ruins your sheet, you're out \$15 for another.

Code sheets aside, DuckTales is a thoroughly engaging game, with humor, adventure, action, and strategy all presented in an outstanding graphics package that keeps you coming back for more. Sure, it's the standard stuff of good adventuring — but the payoff may be the cover of Dime Magazine.



Hardware requirements: 512K minimum memory; EGA, CGA, and Tandy 16-color graphics; two disk drives and joystick recommended; supports The Sound Source.

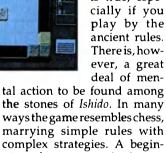
ISHIDO: THE WAY OF STONES

GARY MEREDITH

ith all the recent PC game releases, it's likely that some good games from 1990 will be overlooked. Between all the flashy flight simulators and the latest adventures, there are a few games outside the usual categories that may be ignored by even a fairly knowledgeable buyer. I dearly hope that Ishido: The Way of Stones from Accolade does not meet that fate. It has far too much to offer.

This is a quiet game, but only on the surface. The designers stress that Ishido: The Way of Stones places its accent

> on a contemplative type of gaming, and certainly this is true, especially if you play by the ancient rules. There is, however, a great deal of men-



ning player may take lowerlevel matches in hopes of simply accumulating enough to win. As you gain experience with the board, your emphasis should shift to placing the stones so as to set up multiple

four-way matches.

The game is based on the traditions of several different cultures, though its primary inspiration is from the stoneand-board games of ancient China and Japan. A stone set consists of 72 stones, decorated with a combination of symbols and colors (six of each). Here, in VGA mode, you may choose from five stone sets, which include the Ginza, Ishido, Inner Shapes, Chungfu, and Egyptian sets. There are eight EGA

sets: Gems, Inner Shapes, Magica, Chungfu, Ishido, Ramses, Runes, and Shaman. In some sets, the stones vary in color and shape, but the principle remains the same. You must create matches on a game board consisting of 96 squares. Progressively higher points are awarded for two-way, threeway, and four-way matches, with even greater points for consecutive four-way matches. You may play by the ancient rules, which emphasize getting the maximum number of matches from a given set, or pouch, of stones. Modern rules place the emphasis on scoring the most points, usually by making as many four-way matches as possible.

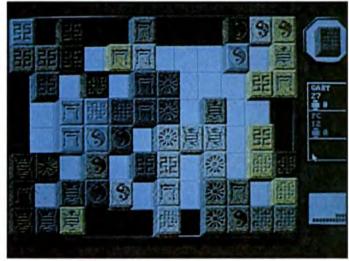
A two-way match is made when you place a stone next to two other stones. One of these stones must match the placed stone by symbol (or shape), while the other must match by color. Three-way matches occur when a placed stone matches two stones by one attribute and another stone by the second



The outer ring of squares can be used to set up your matches, even though no points can be scored for matches on

attribute. The four-way match, which is the Ishido equivalent of a check, is accomplished by placing a stone in the center of a group of four stones, two of which match it with one attribute and two with the other attribute. That's really not as easy as it sounds, and you'll probably find that, at least early on, your four-way matches will be more a matter of luck than of skill.

Ishido: The Way of Stones features several different play options. As mentioned, you have the choice of playing by either the ancient or the modern rules. While the ancient rules emphasize emptying your pouch, that's not to say that there's no importance placed on making four-way matches.



A number of four-way match possibilities have been set up, waiting for just the right stone to be drawn from the pouch. Care must be taken to avoid exhausting your opportunities with lower point matches.

best way to accomplish this is to set up fourway matches.

When you play

according to the

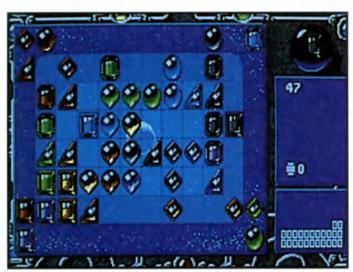
modern rules,

your primary

focus is to score

as many points

as possible. The



You can choose from a wide variety of boards and stone sets, such as the rather cosmic motif of this celestial board with its sparkling, starlike gemstones.

A win, under the ancient rules, occurs when you've emptied your pouch before your opponent has emptied his or hers. If neither of you is able to empty a pouch before all match possibilities are exhausted, the win goes to the player with the most four-ways. If, however, both players have the same number of four-ways, the winner is the player with the fewest stones left. You may play a solitaire game, which is especially good for learning how to set up your stones for four-ways. There's also the option of playing against a friend or against the computer, either in the singlegame challenge mode or in the tournament mode. And, if you'd just like to get an idea of basic Ishido strategy, you can



An Egyptian motif, complete with ankhs and scarabs, is one of the motifs available. You can also design your own stone sets or modify existing sets.

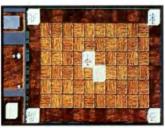
watch the computer play by itself. In any mode except tournament play, you can ask the computer to show the best moves for either a particular situation or on a continuous basis.

If you tire of the game's stone sets, you may want to try your hand at creating your own set. With the editing option, you have control over individual stones or over whole sets. You may alter existing stone sets or create a completely new set of your own design. In addition, if you have Deluxe Paint or Deluxe Paint II, you can further edit existing stone sets. With the tools included in these paint programs, the only limit is your imagination. The only proviso is that you must first create the stone sets with the game's utility before transferring editing functions over to the paint program.

Included with the basic game and the stone set editor is a somewhat metaphysical option—The Oracle of the Stones. This is a system of divination which uses meaningful coincidence, as exemplified by the arrangement of the stones, as a basis for gaining insight into problems or situations posed

by the player. The philosophical idea, synchronicity, which is also a premise of the I Ching, produces an augury from the positions of the stones. As a matter of fact, each Ishido augury has a corresponding hexagram in the I Ching. Far from being fortune-telling, The Oracle of the Stones is really a way of examining situational alternatives. Its inclusion in Ishido lends a gentle touch of the mystical, moving this game beyond the scope of traditional board games. In other words, this is not an electronic version of Chinese checkers.

Accolade has packed a lot into Ishido: The Way of Stones. From the variety of stones and boards to the editing functions, from the outlining of the philosophy and history of this



The rules of Ishido are quite simple, but the subtleties of strategy take some time to master. As in chess, the ability to see several moves ahead is one you'll want to develop.

universal game to the stunning graphics — all the bases have been touched. With a supported sound board, you can hear the satisfying sound of solid stones clicking together. Altogether, the many features of *Ishido* make it a game to enjoy and to savor, long after the latest simulator has been mothballed.



Hardware requirements: 512K minimum memory (640K for Tandy 16-color); VGA (hard drive or 3-1/2" disk drive required), EGA, MCGA, CGA, Hercules, or Tandy 16-color graphics; mouse optional; supports sound boards.

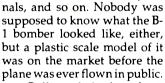
LHX ATTACK

WILLIAM R. TROTTER

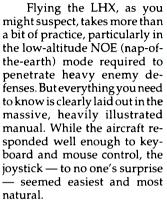
lasnost or no glasnost, you can bet your joystick that the KGB will get a copy of this program. The reason? The LHX (Light Helicopter, Experimental) is still so secret that no model of it has ever been seen by the public. Yet Electronic Arts is releasing a detailed, convincing flight simulator of this very aircraft.

Before you dial the number of your local FBI office, be advised that EA has simply zipped through a loophole in Pentagon security which allows specifications and general de-

sign parameters of many "top secret" projects to seep out via in siders' newsletters, bidding documents, articles in aviation jour-



Culling their data from various public and "deep background" sources, EA has come up with a very plausible simulation of an extremely hot aircraft. The LHX is the most advanced military chopper flying. Instead of the vulnerable (even to rifle fire) tail rotor found on conventional helicopters, it has a ducted "tail fan." Extensive use of RAM ("radar absorbent materials"); triplyredundant digital/optical control systems; and the most advanced electronic countermeasures technology make the LHX the nimblest, fastest, and least-detectable attack helicopter ever flown.



In addition to the LHX, the game lets you fly the more familiar Apache and Blackhawk choppers. While they aren't quite as sleek and sexy as the LHX, they too make for first-class simulations. For something really different, you can also fly the Bell/Boeing "Osprey," a tilt-wing VTOL aircraft that can hover, land, and take off like a chopper, but that can also fly level at speeds in excess of 400 mph.

Once you've spent some time in training flights (and it's suicidal to attempt a combat

Free Flight

THE CELECT HISSION CE DONE

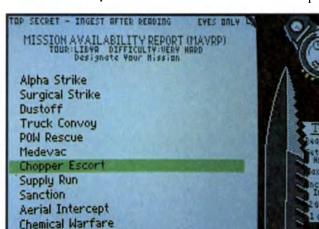


Combat missions can be flown in three global hot spots, at five levels of difficulty. Easy is probably all you can handle at first — or maybe for quite arbita

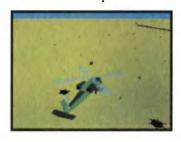
mission until you have), you can opt for a combat assignment in Libya, Vietnam, or East Germany. There are five levels of difficulty, ranging from very easy to extremely hairy. Most players, however, will find the very easy missions dangerous enough, thank you!

Desktop pilots who've logged their hours only in conventional fixed-wing planes may find these choppers disconcertingly tricky to manage at first. It's fairly easy to fly straight and fast at "high" altitudes (anything over 1,000 feet for these birds!), but if you fly that way, the enemy willswarm over you like flies on a rib roast.

Put in some time practic-

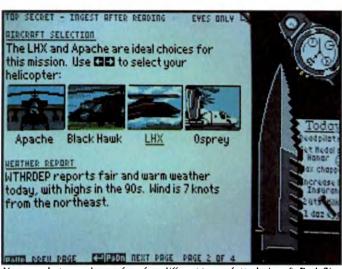


There are many different kinds of missions, some requiring stealth and hot-shot piloting, others requiring lots of firepower.



One of the program's nicest features is the wide variety of viewpoints you can select.

CHOPPER



You can select your chopper from four different types of attack aircraft. Each flies differently enough from the others to make for a new experience.

ing low altitude nap-of-theearth flying. Take off at full thrust; cut to half-thrust before you reach 100 feet; point the chopper toward its objective; and then push the controller to the forward position. Remember that if you accelerate a helicopter while moving forward, the craft will rise. So just take it easy, keep your eye on the altimeter, make little adjustments of thrust as necessary, and don't run into any mountains or tall trees.

Each of these aircraft handles differently, but all of them are vulnerable to sudden thermal updrafts when they're flying low. This is a serious danger in the Libyan scenarios—you can be flying along serenely one second, then plunging toward the ground the next. Quick responses alone can save you when this happens.

The menu of possible missions is pleasingly varied, allowing you to choose some operations that require stealth and some that are pure bangbang. EA's graphics are stylized but beautifully consistent with the feel of the game, and the animation is splendid. Missile and cannon effects are very good — especially the tracers fired at night, which

make a real pyrotechnic splash when they impact.

The combat-heavy missions are quite exciting, with enemy surface-to-air missiles whizzing past, flak shells bursting all around, and bullet holes spider-webbing your windshield. It requires both dexterity and speed to control the aircraft while dodging enemy fire, but if you can tolerate getting shot down a few times, you'll soon get the hang of it.

In fact, for such a big, complex simulator, LHX offers a nearly ideal blend of challenge and reward — even the



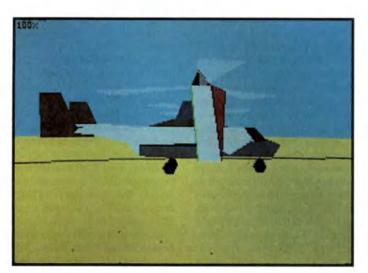
EA's concept of the top-secret LHX seems plausible and convincing—these folks did their homework very well.

failed missions are so gripping that you'll want to play again and again. And, of course, each time you do, you'll get a little more proficient at piloting ... and surviving.

EA has included a number of pleasing little extras, too. Foremost among them is the wide assortment of viewpoints you can key up on your screen. You can follow your chopper from behind, peer down at the action from above, observe your own strafing runs from the target's point of view, or ride any fired missile from the moment of hardpoint launch to the microsecond before impact.

The excellent documentation includes reliable and fascinating tips on the theory and practice of helicopter tactics. All in all, *LHX* is quite a package—it may well become a classic of its kind.





For a novel flying experience, slip into the cockpit of the tilt-winged Osprey, a hybrid design with many interesting properties.

Hardware requirements: 512K minimum memory (640K for VGA graphics); VGA, EGA, or CGA graphics; joystick and mouse optional.

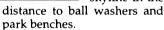
LINKS

BRIAN CARROLL

o sport may be better suited to computer simulation than golf. Since golf is an individual sport, programmers have to simulate only one action, which allows them to focus more attention and greater memory on graphic detail. There is no better example of this than *Links*, winner of a 1990 *GAME PLAYER'S* PC Excellence Award.

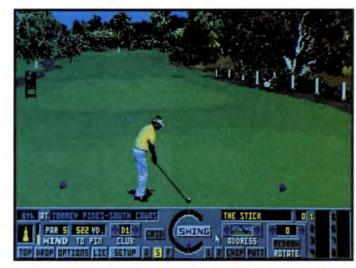
The game, which runs only on VGA or MCGA systems, uses a palette of 256 colors to paint a golf course that's more

realistic than any you've seen on a PC before. The detail is simply amazing, showing you everything from a city skyline in the



But we don't buy golf games for aesthetics--we buy them to play golf. Who cares about pretty pictures if the game play doesn't back them up, right? Fortunately, the programmers at Access have made sure that the action is as smooth as the visuals. It won't take much practice time before the overall feel of *Links* becomes as comfortable to you as a well-worn leather golf glove.

Links also offers PC duffers a degree of control that's almost impossible to achieve, at least consistently, out there on a real course. The placement, bounce, and roll of the ball are determined by the club used, the strength and angle of your swing, your stance, wind direction, and the contours of the course. While you obviously can't control the wind direction or the game course's characteristics, you have a great deal



The "Swing Panel" displays an amazing amount of data, as well as a wide range of options.

of latitude when it comes to the mechanics of your swing.

In addition to your choice of clubs, you can adjust your stance, take a few practice shots, and even draw or fade your shot. If you're not happy with the result, take a mulligan. If you're still not satisfied, take another. You can repeat any shot from the same location and under the same conditions as many times as you like. Besides being an excellent learning tool, mulligans can quickly deflate your score. There is a catch, however. Mulligans are recorded and displayed on your scorecard for all to see.

Another reason for the excellent game play is the minutely detailed course and its realistic effect on play. The flight and impact of the ball obey the laws of physics. For example, if your ball hits the side of a hill, it will bounce and roll like a real ball hitting a real hillside. It also means that after launching a 300-yard missile right down the middle of the fairway, you'll experience a sense of exultation that almost equals the feeling of having accomplished such a feat on a real course.

Achieving this high level of authenticity and realism is plainly not an accident. To produce *Links*, the folks at Access

say they took more than 500 photographs of Torrey Pines Municipal golf course in San Diego, videotaped the entire course, studied topographical and grading charts, and collected data on the area's wind and weather conditions.

The game player, too, pays a price for Links' sophistication. Unless you own a very fast system — a 386 running at 33 MHz, for example — you'll have to wait during play while the 640K of required memory goes to work painting all of that magnificent scenery. This may frustrate you, especially if you're used to faster-paced games. But you'll probably find the high resolution well worth the delay. After all, at least you're not backed up behind a foursome of beginners.

The mechanics of play aren't much different than those in previous PC golf simulations. The most notable deviation is the treatment of the swing. The popular power bar, which appears in most golf games, has been replaced with a swing indicator in the shape of the letter "C." A yellow band at the highest point on the "C" represents the ideal release point to begin a normal downswing. A green band at the lowest point on the indicator represents the perfect point to make contact



A three-dimensional grid will show you where and to what degree the greens slope.

with the ball; it determines your timing.

Press and hold the mouse button or your keyboard space bar to begin your backswing. Release the button to begin your downswing and sets the power level for the stroke. A second click near the green band will launch your shot.

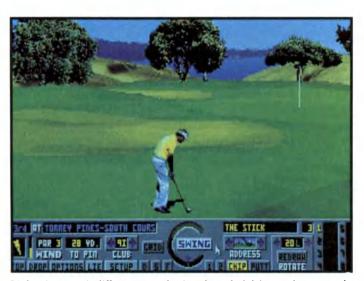
If you release your button or space bar in the overswing area (a red zone at the top of the indicator) you can get some extra power. However, miss the green mark at the bottom and you'll have to pay a heavier price for the error than if you had used a normal swing. It shouldn't take long to get used to the effects of underswinging and overswinging. If you're used to a power bar, however, using this "C"-shaped indicator will initially take quite an adjustment.

Putting, golf's most difficult skill to master, is also the greatest challenge in Links. Depending on the frequency and severity of the breaks in each green, even slight misadjustments in lining up your putt can produce some very undesirable and unexpected results. Adding to your difficulties is the fact that the swing for putting is different than the other swings in the game. It's not necessary to press the button or space bar a second time to make contact with the ball. First-time players should either pay a visit to the practice green or use the mulligan option until the putting stroke becomes second nature.

To help you read the breaks and contours of each green, you can request that a grid be laid over the green. Although this option can be used anywhere on the course, it's most helpful when putting. In fact, it's almost essential for long or medium putts.



Torrey Pines, home to the Shearson Lehman Hutton Open, is recreated in minute detail. On the fourth hole, you can see the Pacific Ocean.



Links gives you six different types of swings for each club in your bag except the putter. This golfer is about to try chipping, a smart tactic close to the green.

The combination of consistent realistic game play and the high degree of control players have over their shots produces exactly what every computer golf hacker dreams of: the possibility of consistently accomplishing the improbable in a very authentic environment. With Links, you can regularly play sub-par golf in conditions that effectively simulate the real world. And with the aid of mulligans, even rounds in the 50s are within reach.

Access has anticipated one criticism of the *Links* golf package by promising to release new course disks — containing both real and imaginary courses — every six to eight weeks. The company plans to release tournament versions and an architect programming disk for designing your own championship golf course. Plenty of gamers should be excited at the possibility of having all that graphic potential at their disposal.



Hardware requirements: 640K minimum memory; VGA or MCGA graphics; hard disk required; mouse or joystick strongly recommended; sound boards supported.

NOBUNAGA'S

WILLIAM R. TROTTER

he appearance of this sequel — a refined, upgraded version of the epic Japanese historical simulation that catapulted Koei to the front rank of PC game companies — gives rise to three questions: How different is this game from the original Nobunaga? If you've not purchased either game, should you bypass the first one and go straight into Nobunaga II? If you own the first Nobunaga, is the sequel really worth the \$50-\$60 price tag?

The answers, in this reviewer's opinion, are: significantly; definitely; and maybe.

For readers not familiar with the earlier game, a bit of

background is in order. The original Nobunaga's Ambition

(released in 1987 in Japan, 1988 in the U.S.) caused a sensation by virtue of its unprecedented multilayered

depth of play and the realistic manner in which it simulated the dynamics of statecraft in a turbulent age. It was, perhaps, the first truly Clausewitzian PC war game in that it treated combat per se as but one extreme of a wide spectrum of political, diplomatic, and economic actions the player could take.

There was rarely enough time, money, or manpower to do everything you wanted to do. Priorities had to be clear, purposeful, and implemented with careful judgment as to both circumstances and men. Even so, your best-laid strategies, just as in real life, could always be thrown into disarray by natural disasters, plagues, espionage, or base treachery.



This time around, the classic Koei command screen lets you issue as many orders per turn as you wish, as long as you have body points to expend.

Nobunaga was so successful that its basic system was applied, often after considerable tinkering, to a series of three more empire-building simulations, culminating inlast year's operatic Bandit Kings of Ancient China.

Now, in Nobunaga II, Koei has attempted a summation of everything that's been learned along the way. The original game has been reshaped, expanded, refined, and burnished. It has layers of challenge and tactical options not found in any other Koei game — stuff nobody had dreamed of doing back when the first game appeared.

Both Nobunaga games are set in the violent, chaotic era of the Japanese civil wars. Here, in the mid-to-late sixteenth century, military technology—including firearms— is more or less equivalent to that of the late Renaissance in Europe. In both games, the object is the same: to unify Japan under a single ruler. Both games can be played against the computer or against up to three other human opponents.

So what's new here? For starters, you're not limited to a single command per turn. Indeed, you may execute as many commands as you wish — the catch is that when a samurai carries out an order, it depletes his stamina (body points), and if a warrior's body points get too low, he becomes powerless until a prolonged period of rest restores his energy. Since you don't want all of your retainers to be weakened at the same time, it's vital to delegate responsibility very carefully.

The cast of characters is larger than in the first game. The sequel includes 400 distinct samurai personalities, based on actual historical figures, and — as every fan of Kurosawa's movies knows — when you have even three or four samurai in one place, you have three or four plots being hatched. Assassination, intrigue, desertion, and betrayal are rife in this game, and they upset things much more often than in the original.

And, brother, are these guys warlike! They just keep coming at you with a ruthless bellicosity that guarantees plenty of battlefield action. The long, breath-catching lulls that



Choose your fiefdom carefully—mountainous borders offer security and focus your attention in other directions.

AMBITION II

sometimes settled over game play during Nobunaga are rare indeed in the newer version. Even on the easiest level of play, you'll often have to fight tooth and nail just to survive.

It's only natural that, with more emphasis on combat, Koei's most extensive revisions are in the battlefield mode. Combat options are much more varied, and now include night attacks and pell-mell charges that can shatter the enemy's ranks (if successful) or leave you with your best troops cut off and surrounded (if not). The most interesting of the new combat entrees is the siege option. An outnumbered or conservative strategist now can withdraw behind fortifications and fight a methodical defensive campaign, often outlasting a much superior attacker. Both offensive and defensive siege tactics are specialized, and a special time scale is used that's different from the time scale employed in field campaigns.

The siege warfare graphics, including walls, moats, fences, towers, and a last-stand redoubt, are much more literal and detailed than anything Koei has given us before. Field warfare is still fought with chess piece icons and hexagons, although the landscape graphics are much finer-grained and realistic than in the original game.

Other new features? You can personalize the characters if you like, putting your own moniker and those of your friends in the place of the historical warlords. You can designate successors, up to three generations' worth, and let destiny work itself out on a vast, dynastic scale. If you're playing with two friends and one of them has to retire, you can have the computer take over for him.



Samurai shown in red have become too weakened to act further without resting. Never, ever, let all of your samurai "go red" at the same time.



Battle screens are handsomely done, and there are several new and realistic tactical options, including night battles.

And you can select "0" when asked "Number of players?" and the computer will play an entire game against itself while you watch. These are not major additions, to be sure, but they are handy and thoughtful, and add to the value of the new game.

One thing remains unchanged: the Model-T keyboard interface. Many reviewers have griped about it, but

c'mon now, let's be honest: Would any of these games really be that much easier to play with a mouse?

Nobunaga II has already sold 500,000 copies in Japan, mainly to gamers who already owned Nobunaga. The quality of this fine game is such that the same phenomenon could happen here as well.

GP

Hardware requirements: 384K memory; EGA and CGA graphics.

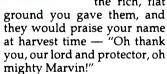
POPULOUS

MATTHEW A. FIRME

magine getting up from your desk, leaving your computer, and going out into the world possessing all the powers you have while playing *Populous*. You could flatten that shopping center down the block, the one that made your property value plummet, and cover the land with forest.

Or you could move your house to the top of a mountain overlooking a vast inland sea where Indiana once was. The people below would look up, dimly remembering a time

when your mountain was just another neighborhood, and they would marvel at your omnipotence. They would plant crops in the rich, flat



Or Wanda, or Mr. Big, or whatever you want them to call you.

It's amazingly easy to develop delusions of grandeur while playing Populous, a new game from Electronic Arts. You play one of two gods who share dominion over the world and its people. Each of you has a group of followers, yours good" and his "evil." (You can play the evil god, but only for one round unless you're playing with a friend via a modem. As the good god, you can play round after round as long as you keep wiping out the evil people.) Your task is to make the lives of your people as prosperous as possible, fostering their growth by divinely

manipulating their environment and behavior.

The majority of these manipulations take the form of flattening land on which they can settle. You can raise or lower the varying terrains around your initial population one square at a time, trying to create as large a plot of arable land as possible. Your people, known in the game's terminology as walkers, will erect shelters and plant crops as you provide land for them.

The sophistication of the walkers' shelters depends on how much food they can raise. On a small patch of usable land, a walker might be able to build a wigwam of skins and grow enough crops to sustain only himself. But on a large clearing, your walkers can build a castle and raise enough food to increase their population rapidly.

While you're working with your good walkers, the evil god is doing the same with his followers. So in their area of the



The open book at the top of the screen gives an overview of the entire world you seek to conquer while the closeup area shows the walkers getting your immediate attention.

Inevitably, as tensions mount and land becomes scarce, global warfare erupts. Now the true object of *Populous* becomes clear: You must do whatever you can to guarantee that your walkers win the war.

There are a number of variables in *Populous*, insuring that each new game offers a novel challenge. In some rounds, for example, your powers are limited. You might be unable to summon an earthquake, or you might be unable to alter land. Even the climates of your sections of the world will change, from icy tundra to arid desert — each calling for different strategies.

Using the "Promised



With the Promised Lands accessory disk, you can play a major role in the French Revolution. The evil people are the ones in red coats.

In harsher climates such as this ice world, walkers have a shorter lifespan so they cover less ground than in more hospitable areas.



world, the evil people are also building, planting crops, and expanding their population. Eventually the two peoples will cover all the available land on the map, and fighting will begin wherever their territories overlap.

Lands" accessory disk included with the game, your walkers can become soldiers of the French Revolution, cowboys and Indians in the Old West, or people made from what appear to be Lego blocks, living in Lego land.



Things take on new shapes in Silly Land, another of the worlds on the Promised Lands accessory disk. Those green creatures are your people.



Creating a knight is one of your most potent weapons against the enemy. Here your knight is looting and pillaging, two valuable attributes. A strong knight can destroy vast areas of enemy territory, leaving behind only a wake of smoking ruins.

Skeptics will be surprised at how very enjoyable playing a god turns out to be. The walkers, both good and bad, are fascinating to watch as they move about. They really seem to have lives of their own, and your control over their lives gives you an undeniable sense of power—especially once you start exercising your ability to heap suffering on the evil walkers.

Soon you'll find yourself feeling parental about your followers, nurturing them and watching them grow. You'll be happy to wipe out the evil walkers with volcanoes, swamps, and earthquakes should they stand in the way of your chosen people.

That feeling of power hooks you from the start. But the real success of Populous lies in the game's nearly perfect balance between action and strategy. The screen is always active — your closeup view reveals walkers moving busily about, while the world view shows the blinking colors of

the two factions, migrating and expanding across the land. This constant activity underscores the feeling that you are watching real, motivated people, and creates a very urgent and living backdrop for your divine intervention.

Another of the game's strong points is its beautifully designed interface, an iconbased system of options and commands. By moving your pointer to the appropriate icon, you can quickly and easily perform almost any task. Although the game can be played

using keyboard commands, it was obviously designed to be played with a mouse and is more difficult and sluggish using the keyboard.

Populous' only real flaw is its docu-

mentation, which isn't as helpful as it could be for the beginning player. Many elements of this complex game are barely addressed, and what is said is sometimes confusing. The hint booklet from the game's publisher, for instance, seems to contain better instructions, in some respects, than those included with the software. But despite the documentation, the game's strong design, complex strategy, and engaging premise encourage hours of handson training.

After each game a scoring screen

appears. The game ends when one

side or the other has been wiped



Hardware requirements: 512K minimum memory; VGA, EGA, CGA, or Tandy 16-color graphics; joystick or mouse recommended; two-player game via a modem.

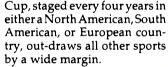
RICK DAVIS'S WORLD

NEIL RANDALL

By the time you read this, the 1990 World Cup will be well under way. In all likelihood, it will attract the largest television audience of any sporting event in history.

To a nation accustomed to three sports — baseball, basketball, and football — dominating our television screens, this may come as something of a surprise. Soccer in the United States and Canada has never even approached the obsessive popularity it has earned in almost all other parts of the

globe. Its professional leagues have invariably folded — victims of low ratings and even lower attendance figures. Yet the World



Soccer's inability to sustain fan interest in North America stems from two major factors. First, its playing season conflicts with baseball. Second - and more important — it is a very low-scoring sport. Football scores are often on the order of 35-21; basketball scores frequently top 100 points for both teams; even baseball averages 6-8 runs per game. By contrast, soccer scores of 1-0 and even 0-0 are quite commonplace. That's why indoor soccer has done relatively well in the U.S.; the scores are higher, and some portion of the North American audience seems to equate scoring with excitement.

All of which brings us to Rick Davis's World Trophy Soc-



If your opponent scores a goal, you get the kickoff. Press the fire button to pass the ball to a teammate, then head down the field.

cer, a translation of the popular World Trophy Soccer coin-op arcade game. As you might expect, this game bears a direct resemblance to the arcade version. It has the same strengths and weaknesses, and is a good approximation of the original — overall a pretty good game, but not an exceptional one.

If you have a joystick, Rick Davis's World Trophy Soccer is quite enjoyable. Playing from the keyboard is awkward, however, and it takes considerably more getting used to. The problem is that key combinations rarely work; when you press the forward key, for instance, you must release it before pressing the forward-left key, and so on. This means that you'll end up losing the ball a

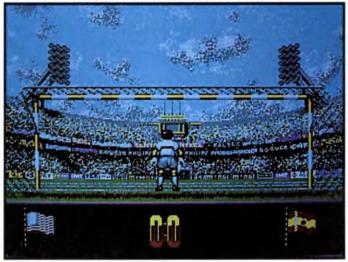


When you're dribbling with the ball, your opponent will try to tackle you by sliding into your feet from behind. Be prepared — he'll likely come up with the ball.

great deal, and you'll quickly get frustrated.

The game begins with you as the controller of one national team. You begin the first round by choosing which team to represent, France, Germany, Italy, or Spain. These games are very short, and goals are hard to come by, so often you end up with a scoreless draw or a 1-0 match. As you move through the various rounds, you play other teams from other nations, and the computer tracks your progress.

You control one player at a time. By pressing the fire button, you gain control over the player on your team who's closest to the ball, and an arrow appears above that player. By pressing in one of the eight



When the opposing player enters your goal crease, the scene shifts to your goalkeeper's view. Use the joystick to move from side to side, and press the fire button to jump for the ball.



The opening screen lets you choose which team you'll play against. No slouches here: Each team is capable of winning the World Cup.

TROPHY SOCCER

joystick directions, or by using the numeric keypad or other keyboard assignments, you move that player down the field. When you want to pass the ball or take a shot on net, you point the player in the direction you want the ball to go and press the fire button or its keyboard equivalent.

The ball travels until it goes out of bounds, reaches a player on your team or the opposing team, or rolls to a stop (and when a goal is scored, of course). Players on both teams attempt to gain control over a passed or shot ball, and, by pressing the fire button, you can take control over the player closest to the ball once more.

If an opponent has the ball, you can attempt a tackle. Unlike American football, where tackling means leaping on the ball-carrier and dragging him to the ground, tackling in soccer simply means taking the ball away. The only way to do so is to slide into the ball (or wait until the opponent coughs it up), which you can do by pressing the fire button when you're near your opponent. Your player will slide and stick out his leg, hopefully kicking the ball away from the opposing player.

When the ball goes out of bounds at the sides of the field, a throw-in occurs. If the ball



At the beginning of each half, the teams line up at the center field circle. Your goal is to get possession of the ball immediately.



When your forward takes the ball near the goal crease, consider passing rather than heading toward the goal. This often results in a better shot opportunity.

leaves the field and goes into the end zones, a goal kick or a corner kick takes place, depending on which team was responsible for the stoppage in play. Free kicks (i.e., fouls) also occur, albeit not very often.

Even though soccer is not essentially about scoring goals, doing so is still the only way to win. As a result, Rick Davis Soccer nicely emphasizes the importance of the shots on goal by changing from an overhead to a player's-eye view of the shooter and the goalkeeper. What becomes immediately apparent, though, is that even with this view goals are hard to score. Given soccer's reputation for low-scoring contests, this is an intentional (and correct) design.

Once inside the opposing team's penalty area, the game shifts to a close-up of the shooting situation. You can move from side to side or forward, and you can aim and shoot. The opposing goalie will jump up or across to make the save; if he fails, you've earned a valuable point. After a score, play resumes with a kickoff at center field.

A reverse close-up occurs when the opposing team bears down upon your net. Here you control the goalie by maneuvering the joystick and pressing the fire button to jump. It's anything but easy. Ideally, your goalie catches the ball and then kicks it away, but often there will be a rebound and you'll

have to make another save.

These close-ups are what make Rick Davis's Soccer unique. The problem with soccer games released to date is that they fail to distinguish between play in the middle of the field and play at the goal. Certainly this new game could be considerably more detailed in its approach, but the close-ups are good first

steps. If only they were smoother, they would be extremely appealing.

But like all computer soccer games released to date, Rick Davis's Soccer represents

only a partial simulation of this complex sport. Nowhere to be seen are the long, involved build-ups, with teams making pass after pass and trying various maneuvers in an attempt to break through a seemingly impenetrable defense. There is simply not enough control over any aspect of the game.

If you like the arcade version of this game, you'll like this version as well. If you're a real soccer fan, however, you'll probably be disappointed. Somewhere, sometime, someone will release a superb soccer simulation. So far, though, no one's even come close. Rick Davis World Trophy Soccer is fun, especially with two players, but it's not really soccer.





When your forward nears the goal, the overhead view is replaced by this view of the net and the ball. Aim well, but shoot quickly.

Hardware requirements: 512K minimum memory; VGA, EGA, CGA, or Tandy 16-color graphics; Joystick optional.

TREASURE TRAP

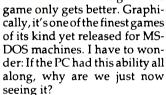
SCOTT MILLER

fter playing *Treasure*Trap for five minutes, I had to double-check my computer to make sure it hadn't mutated into an Amiga clone. Why was my PC suddenly exhibiting eyepopping graphics? Did a new virus scramble the circuitry, giving my PC the ability to produce smooth, flicker-free animation?

After pinching myself for the third time, I decided the opening title sequence was merely a power play. Undoubtedly, the designers spent all their efforts on the game's

opening animation and the actual game screens couldn't possibly be as impressive.

It's a good thing I don't gamble for a living — the



Treasure Trap is an ingeniously fresh game published by Electronic Zoo. The opening title animation shows Howard Kelp, the iron-helmeted, deep sea hero of the game, as he's lowered into the sea from a crane. Three hundred feet below rests the majestic Esmeralda, sunk 70 years earlier while carrying a huge cargo of gold bullion.

Newtechnology (the game is set in 1927) allows for dives of 200 feet, but this will be a breakthrough attempt to salvage the \$50 million worth of gold waiting 300 feet below.

As Howard Kelp, you enter the ship through a gaping



In this level, Howard must push the single crate toward the stack of crates so he can jump up and collect the gold bars. Watch out for the blue jellyfish lurking above.

hole and find yourself in a room with four doors, a bar of gold, two keys, and several aquatic killers. It's the killer fish that make the game hard, and it's the clever puzzles that make *Treasure Trap* addictive and fun.

Each of the 100 rooms you'll explore is a unique combination of traps, puzzles, hazards, and rewards. The rooms are viewed from a three-dimensional perspective (above and diagonally). At first it's a little difficult to maneuver without slamming into crates or walking off ledges, but you'll soon learn to judge an object's true position by watching its shadow.

Most rooms have one or more gold bars to be collected — you can do this by simply touching the gold. A clever bit of animation shows the gold you've collected pouring from a spout as melted globs, and being tallied on a counter.

Somehow, during the wreck of the Esmeralda, the gold bars were flung to the most hard-to-reach locations of the ship. And in the 70 years since the ship sank, it has become home to sharks, jellyfish, piranha, octopi, electric eels, stingrays, and other killer sea life.

To be successful, it's important to note that each underwater denizen has its own pattern of movement. When a crab hits an obstacle, it turns right and continues; an octopus heads left; and jelly fish bob up and down, from floor to ceiling. A few fish, like the piranha and the shark, go in any direction they please and are very dangerous.

Other hazards include seeker mines, activated by the presence of your gaudy metal helmet, and whirlpools, which can take you to entirely different rooms against your will. Conveyor belts, floating crates, moveable furnishings, and collapsing bridges are also worthy obstructions.

It's hard to classify *Treasure* Trap: Is it an arcade game or a



Refer to the giant scrolling map at any point during your treasure hunt to see where you need to explore next.



Ourhero, Howard Kelp, is about to grab his first gold bar, which is resting on top of the crate.



Our man Kelp studies a seemingly hopeless situation; badly-needed gold surrounded by jellyfish. The solution is to release one of your friendly fish, which will devour the slimy creatures.

puzzle-filled adventure game? Navigating Howard nimbly past dangers and jumping from ledges and crates is certainly a point for the arcade side. But it's the well-designed puzzles involving hidden gold, booby traps, and discovery of the correct sequence of rooms that give this game its appeal.

Beyond the first few "starter" rooms, it's no easy task collecting the gold bars that mean everything to your score. Sometimes you'll just be dodging those pesky fish, but usually you'll need to wake up the gray matter and figure out a solution. This is sometimes an annoyance for arcade fanatics—thinking, that is—but in this game there's no way around it.

For example, sometimes the gold is resting on top of a column of crates too high to reach. You should look around for another obstacle, like a barrel, that can be pushed closer, allowing you to jump on top of the crates. But watch out — moving any obstacle might let loose a trapped creature. And don't take too long or your oxygen might run out.

As for oxygen, someone was nice enough to leave bottles of the stuff conveniently placed throughout many of the rooms, usually in easy-to-reach spots. But don't overstock on oxygen oryoursuit expands like a small blimp, leaving you completely immobile and vulnerable for a brief time.

You need color-coded keys



Sometimes you've got to hitch a ride on a floating crate to get where you need to go. On this level, the blue key is the object of prime importance.

to open most doors, so key collecting becomes another barrier. And since your key ring can hold only three keys at a time, you need to plan your route through the rooms in just the right order or you won't have the matching key when you need it.

It's a good thing that Treasure Trap has a save mode, otherwise the game might verge on being impossible. Save your game often, and restore whenever you find yourself stuck on a dead-end route. Another helpful feature is the "friendly fish," an aquatic "smart bomb" if you will, which you get for every 80 bars of gold you collect. When you release a friendly fish, it swims

throughout the entire level and devours all unfriendly creatures. The animated sequence of the small fish chomping away at the bigger, deadlier ones is a classic bit of humor.

The graphics are the highlight of this game, especially in 256-color VGA mode. However, in CGA mode the game proved much too difficult to play, since the perception of depth in the rooms is not well rendered without the subtle shadings that EGA and VGA allow. Musically, the game's jazzed-up rendition of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat," via the AdLib sound board, is worth recording for later play.

If you've been looking for a unique arcade game with plenty of depth (pun alert), *Treasure Trap* will meet your needs and probably drive you mad in the process.





This is a trick level. If you cross the bridge to get the red key, the bridge will collapse before you can get back out. The trick is to move the crate toward the key, jump up, then escape the level via the bridge.

Hardware requirements: 640K minimum memory (no TSR's should be running); VGA, EGA, CGA, and Tandy 16-color graphics; supports AdLib sound board; joystick optional.

WONDERLAND

GARY MEREDITH

enerations of readers have had a special place in their hearts for the playful pandemonium of Lewis Carroll's classic Alice in Wonderland. If you've ever wondered what it would be like to trade quips with the Mad Hatter and the March Hare, wonder no more. In Wonderland, from Virgin Mastertronic, you become Alice, the girl whose curiosity takes her on a wild journey through a land where logic has been turned on its head.

Of course, as Alice, you may tell yourself that you didn't really see the rabbit in a waistcoat who appears while you're enjoying a quiet picnic in the country. But when pears in a nearby orchard start turning into lanterns, you know that reality has suddenly become altered — now you simply must find out why. Finding out, however, means following the rabbit through a hedge, down a hole, and into a world where things may or may not be as they seem.

The hole leads to a corridor, where you must try to get

your bearings and then carefully look around. You'll want to pick up any items you find, even though a use for each item may not be obvious when you first acquire it. As in many other role-playing graphic adventures, your strategy in Wonderland involves trying to find creative uses for the items you uncover. Some objects have obvious uses, such as bottles that say "drink me." But using even these takes some ingenuity, however, since there may be several ways and situations in which to use the bottled potions — but there may be only one right way or one right time.

Once you've picked up everything that's not nailed down, your next order of business is to find your way into and out of the Great Hall. Using one of the articles you've acquired, you must convince the rabbit that you're someone else. If you can pull this off, leaving the hall will be easy. What's not easy is figuring out what to do after you've left the hall and entered Wonderland. There are a number of paths you can take,



The piano contains something you need badly. Before you can get it, you'll have to figure out both how to get the dancing chairs to cooperate and how to use the few items you have in your possession.

some of which require the most extreme caution. And it's on these dangerous paths that the ability to save your game really comes in handy.

As with many other roleplaying games, you should make it a habit to save your game, especially when you're about to enter unknown territory. Venturing into the enclosed garden from the treehouse is a case in point. Unless you have exactly the right item when you enter the garden (and you probably won't the first time around), you'll have no way to get out. Exploring the Duchess' house, particularly the kitchen area, is also hazardous if you haven't recently saved the game.

Talking to all the strange and wondrous characters you meet is another skill you'll need to cultivate. Sure, there are a few folks who will answer a simple question with a simple answer, but for the most part, obfuscation is the order of the day for the denizens of Wonderland. The conversations (and I use the term very loosely) that you have with the caterpillar and the guests at the tea party are particularly exasperating. Beyond that, even starting a conversation with the Cheshire cat can be an exercise in futility.

If you're used to playing games only on MS-DOS ma-



The peace and tranquility of this pastoral scene is about to become a distant memory for Alice.

chines, Wonderland may look and play a little strangely to you. Those who've had some experience with the Macintosh, however, will probably feel right at home. Wonderland uses a multiple window format that may take the hard-core MS-DOS user some getting used to. Windows for text, graphics, automatic mapping (a real blessing considering the labyrinthine nature of Alice's adventure), personal inventory, room inventory, and a compass rose can be sized and positioned on the screen. This feature allows you to customize (and save) the game layout according to personal taste. While this looks very impressive, there are two minor problems.

First, there's the problem of too much information. Sev-

the pull-down menus, the screen can become a pretty be-wildering melange. Of course, you can always eliminate some of the windows. But you'll likely discover that several of them (the automatic-mapping window is one) become almost a necessity even if they are sometimes confusing to interpret.

The other problem with the windows approach is its appetite for memory. Because many of the scenes in the game feature animated graphics and a quite sophisticated sound track, you're already operating near the edge as far as available RAM is concerned. (If you have any memory-resident programs aside from a mouse driver, you'll have to get rid of them). When the game starts flashing messages about shutting down



watch when everything is running smoothly. But even apart from the windows design, Wonderland simply has a unique feel, different from most other graphic-adventure games. And this can be attributed to its origin. The game, like the classic literary work, is thoroughly British — from the anglicized spelling to the dry humor to the understated but gorgeous graphics. The overall design works very much toward making the game visually appealing, giving it a delightfully filigreed Victorian appearance. If you're in search of something different in a role-playing adventure, or if you'd just like to know what the caterpillar really had in his hookah, you'll want to give Wonderland a go.

Once these guys have finished their transaction, you should be able to gain entrance to the Duchess' house. You'll want to avoid her cook, however, unless you enjoy having crockery broken over your head.



Yep, this is the hookah-smoking caterpillar Grace Slick once sang of so eloquently. Getting a response out of him that's not couched in a question will be a major task for you.

eral pull-down menus dealing with text entry and inventory manipulation can be activated, and these menus appear over the windows. When you've got all of the windows open and you're searching for items in

various windows because you've run out of memory, the clever design suddenly loses some of its charm.

All things considered, though, Wonderland is a very impressive game to play and to



Hardware requirements: 640K minimum memory; VGA, MCGA, EGA, CGA (no graphics), Hercules, and Tandy 16-color graphics; hard disk recommended; 8-Mhz 286 or faster machine recommended; mouse recommended; joystick optional; AdLib and Roland sound boards supported.

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